FULL 68 PAGES

AMAZING STORIES

Sinister TALES

1/-

APPROVED COMIC

№ 64

MANKIND HAS LONG DREAMED OF IMMORTALITY.... BUT WOULD THIS GIFT BE WORTH THE PRICE OF MAN'S HUMANITY? THAT'S THE PERSONAL QUESTION **NOMAN** MUST ANSWER, AND THE FUTURE OF **THUNDER** DEPENDS ON HIS DECISION....

TO BE OR NOT TO BE!

SINISTER TALES No. 64
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SPECIAL MISSION: BRAZIL! NOMAN, GUARDING AN INTERNATIONAL GROUP OF THUNDER MEDIATORS....

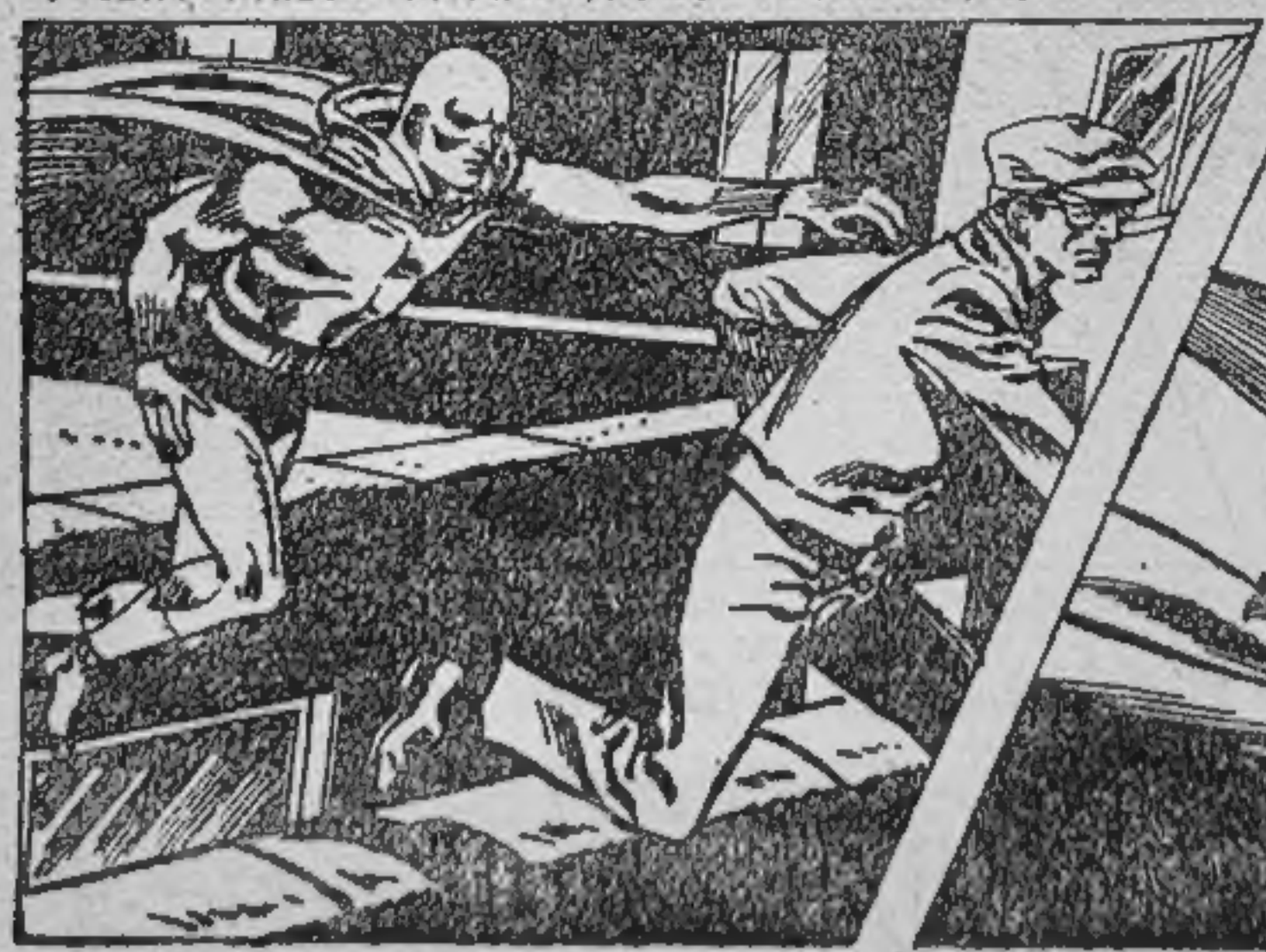
...IS KILLED DURING A WILD DEMONSTRATION!

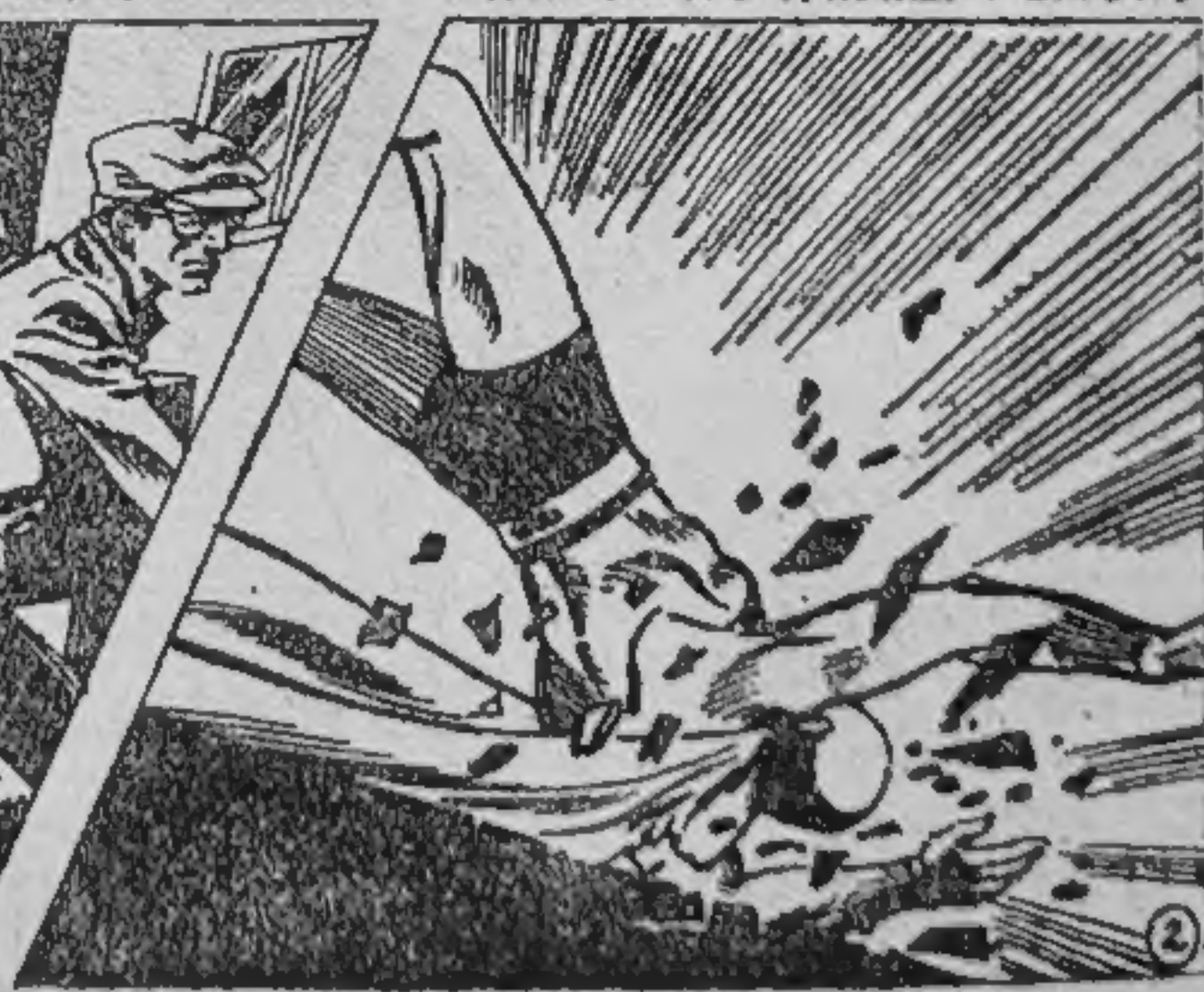
SPECIAL MISSION: VIET NAM! RETURNING FROM RECONNAISSANCE FROM BEHIND ENEMY LINES...

NOMAN IS CUT DOWN BY A SPRAY OF MACHINE GUN FIRE!...

SPECIAL MISSION: WASHINGTON! NOMAN MISCALCULATES A JUMP WHILE CHASING A SUSPECTED SPY...

AND FALLS TO HIS DESTRUCTION ON THE PAVEMENT BELOW!





THIS IS TOO MUCH! NOMAN IS LOSING ANDROIDS AT A FANTASTIC RATE!
CALL HIM IN... WE'LL GET TO THE BOTTOM OF IT!

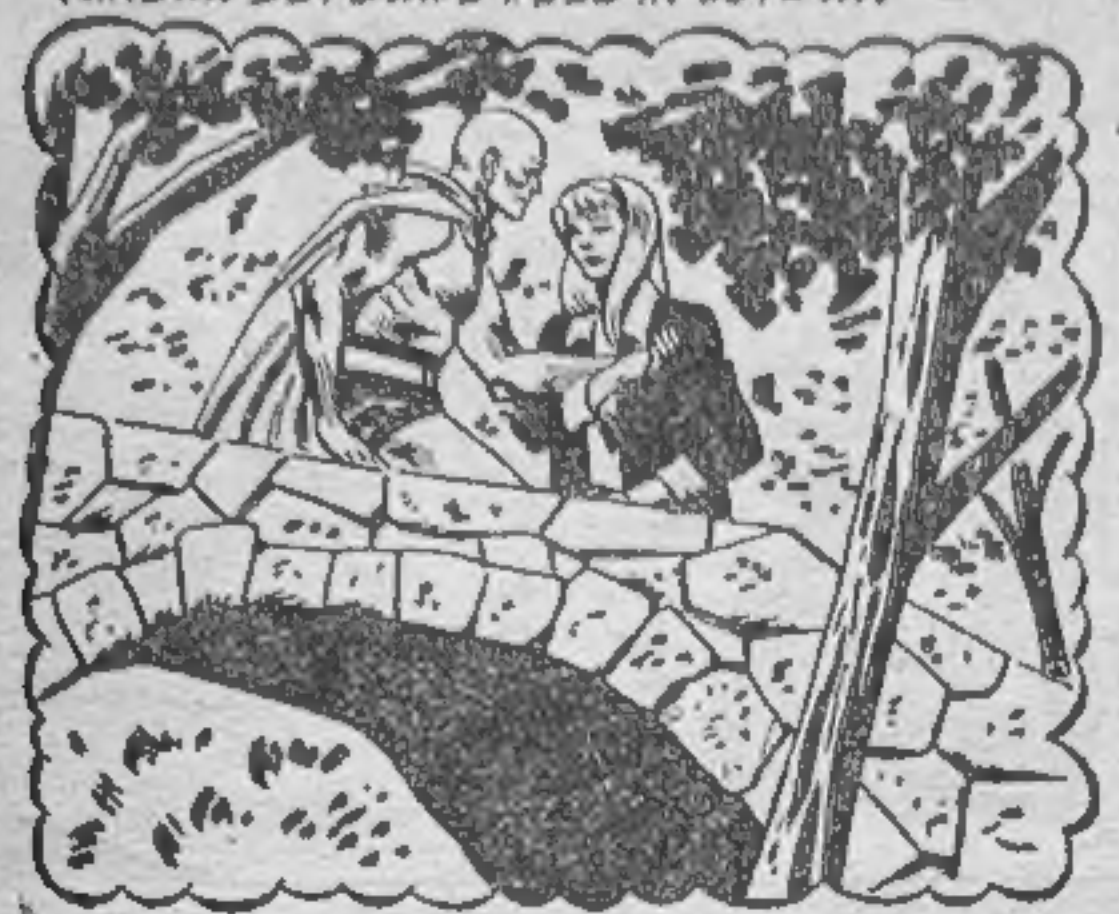
WE'VE FOUND YOU PERFECTLY SOUND...
SO WHAT'S WRONG?!

NOTHING'S WRONG! I'M JUST TIRED... I NEED A REST!
THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE... WE'D BETTER LET DR. PASCHKE TALK TO HIM...

ALRIGHT... IF YOU MUST KNOW... I'M SICK OF BEING A SYNTHETIC TOY... I WANT TO BE HUMAN AGAIN!

BUT WHY?!
IT'S NO SNAP DECISION... I'VE BEEN REGRETTING EVERYTHING SINCE WEST BERLIN, LAST SUMMER...

I MET A GIRL THERE.... IS THAT SO ABSURD?! A SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE... SHE WAS FRIENDLY AND UNDERSTANDING...


SHE KNEW I WAS MERELY ONE ANDROID OF MANY, SHARING THE MIND OF A MAN LONG DEAD.... SHE WAS JUST BEING KIND.... BUT I.... I FELL IN LOVE....

...AND I CAN'T FORGET HER...I CAN'T!
I RESIGN FROM THUNDER ...THE DEVIL WITH YOU!

NOMAN AWAKES TO FIND HIMSELF A PRISONER!
WE'VE INACTIVATED ALL ANDROIDS EXCEPT THIS ONE...YOU'VE NO ALTERNATIVE BUT TO SEE THIS SIMULATED PROJECTION...

.... DR. DUNN WORKED FOR MANY YEARS, ALONG WITH MANY OTHERS, ON THE INTRICACIES OF YOUR HOUSING AND SENSORY UNITS...

I KNOW ALL THIS FAR BETTER THAN YOU EVER COULD! AFTER ALL, I AM DR. DUNN.... I POSSESS HIS EVERY MEMORY!

EXACTLY! BUT DO YOU RECALL THAT FINAL HURTLE TO TRANSFER THE MIND OF A LIVING MAN INTO THEIR CREATION!
...BECAUSE YOU INSISTED ON BEING THAT MAN!

IN MINUTES, THE WITHERING BODY THAT HAD SERVED AS YOUR SOLE FRAGILE THREAD TO LIFE BECAME NOMAN!

AN ALMOST INDESTRUCTIBLE ANDROID OF INCREDIBLE STRENGTH!

AND WITH THE CAPE DESIGNED BY PROFESSOR JENNINGS, YOU CAN BE INVISIBLE AT WILL!

WOULD YOU GIVE ALL THAT UP NOW!??
WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO DO.... BRAINWASH ME WITH SOME KIND OF PUBLIC RELATIONS PROPAGANDA???

THINK, NOMAN!.... MOST IMPORTANT ARE THE PERSONAL ADVANTAGES....
FOR YOU, MAJOR WOUNDS ARE MERELY A NUISANCE!

... AND WITH UNLIMITED TIME TO PROGRAM DUNN'S BRAIN, YOU HAVE THE POTENTIAL OF BECOMING THE MOST INTELLIGENT BEING ON EARTH!...

I KNOW.... I KNOW... BUT I KNOW HOW MISTAKEN I WAS....
ARE YOU SURE?!! LOOK AT YOURSELF AS YOU WERE BEFORE THE TRANSFORMATION!

AND FEEL THE WAY YOU FELT THEN.... BENT WITH THE SORE AND SPENT FLESH AND BONE BODY OF A HUMAN BEING...

ENOUGH! AT LEAST I LIVED IN MY NATURAL STATE... AS ALL MEN SHOULD!
I'VE HAD ENOUGH TORMENT!

AND THUNDER WILL HAVE TO GET ALONG WITHOUT ME!...

WE MUST STOP HIM! HE'S DISPLAYED MARKED SUICIDAL TENDENCIES IN THE PAST FEW WEEKS!...
WHERE COULD HE BE HEADED?...

I'D GUESS WEST GERMANY, IF HE'S AS DISTURBED AS I SUSPECT!...
WHAT IF HE DOES SOMETHING DESPERATE?..... THOSE ANDROIDS ARE WORTH MILLIONS!....

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WORLD...

I HAD TO SEE YOU AGAIN, TRUDY.... DON'T BE AFRAID....

BUT I MUSN'T BE SEEN!...

I CAN OFFER YOU LESS NOW THAN I COULD BEFORE... I'VE LEFT THUNDER.... I'M AN OUTLAW!...

BUT... WILL YOU MARRY ME?

I'LL GIVE YOU MY ANSWER TOMORROW, NOMAN.... I HAVE TO THINK...
HE'S ACTING SO STRANGELY....

I'VE ALWAYS ADMIRED HIM, BUT IS IT THE RIGHT MOVE NOW ?...

THE NEXT MORNING, CIRCUMSTANCES PROVIDE THE ANSWER...
TRUDY, WE'VE BEEN NOTIFIED NOMAN MAY TRY TO CONTACT YOU.... HE'S SUFFERING FROM A NERVOUS COLLAPSE....

IT'S IMPERATIVE THEY GET HIM BACK IN SHAPE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.... A VITAL MISSION DEPENDS ON IT!

WHAT MISSION?
IT'S TOP SECRET.... SOMETHING TO DO WITH THE SPACE AGENCY...

THAT'S A TRICK... THEY'RE TRYING TO USE HER AGAINST ME!...

NOMAN RECEIVES AN ABRUPT MESSAGE THROUGH THE RADIO IN HIS BRAINPLATE...

AFTER TRANSFERRING BACK TO AN ANDROID AT THUNDER H.Q....

THE UNSEEN AGENT S PASSN'E UNTIL HE FACES HIS OWN EXTINCTION!..

END

FAMILY TREE!

YOU'VE GOT TO LET ME DO THIS! YOU'LL BE WELL PAID... YOU'VE GOT TO HELP ME!

NO! NO! YOU MUST BE OUT OF YOUR MIND! WHY DO YOU WANT YOUR NAME ON A TOMBSTONE THAT'S OVER 400 YEARS OLD?

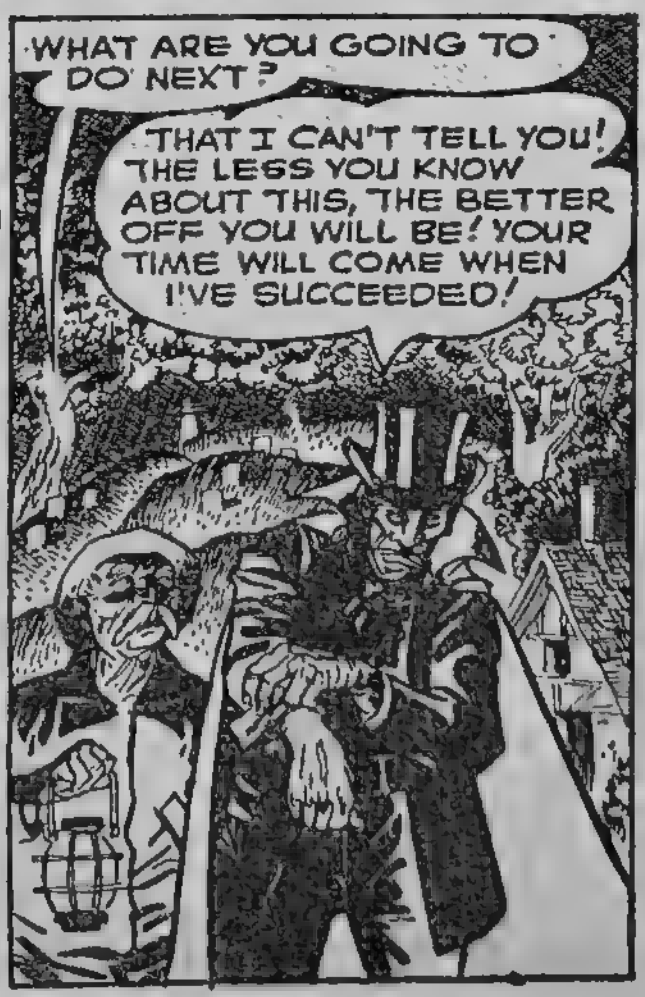
NO ONE KNEW WHERE HE CAME FROM! BUT THE FIRST MAN TO SEE HIM WAS THE WATCHMAN AT THE ROYAL CEMETERY...

ONE OF THE STRANGEST TALES EVER TOLD!

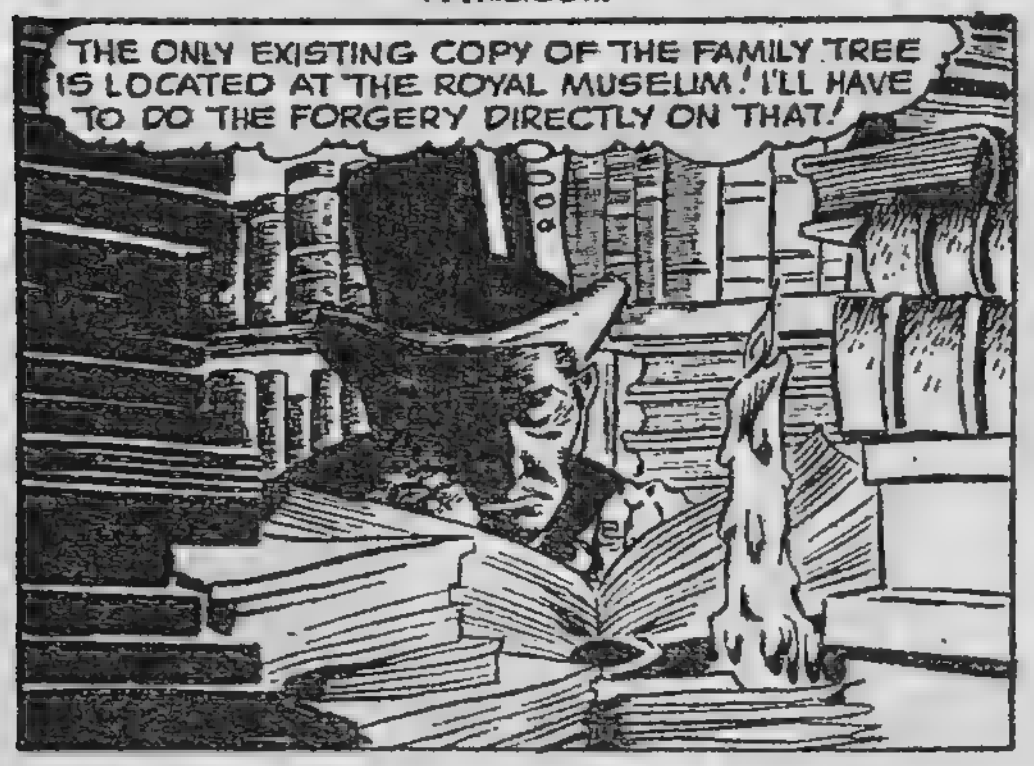
F410

THE STRANGER HAD A WILD LOOK IN HIS EYES WHEN HE THOUGHT HIS WISHES WERE BEING THWARTED...

UNDER COVER OF DARKNESS, THE TWO MEN MADE THEIR WAY BACK TO ANCIENT GRAVES THAT HAD LONG BEEN UNVISITED! THEY CHOSE ONE WHICH WAS WORN SMOOTH.

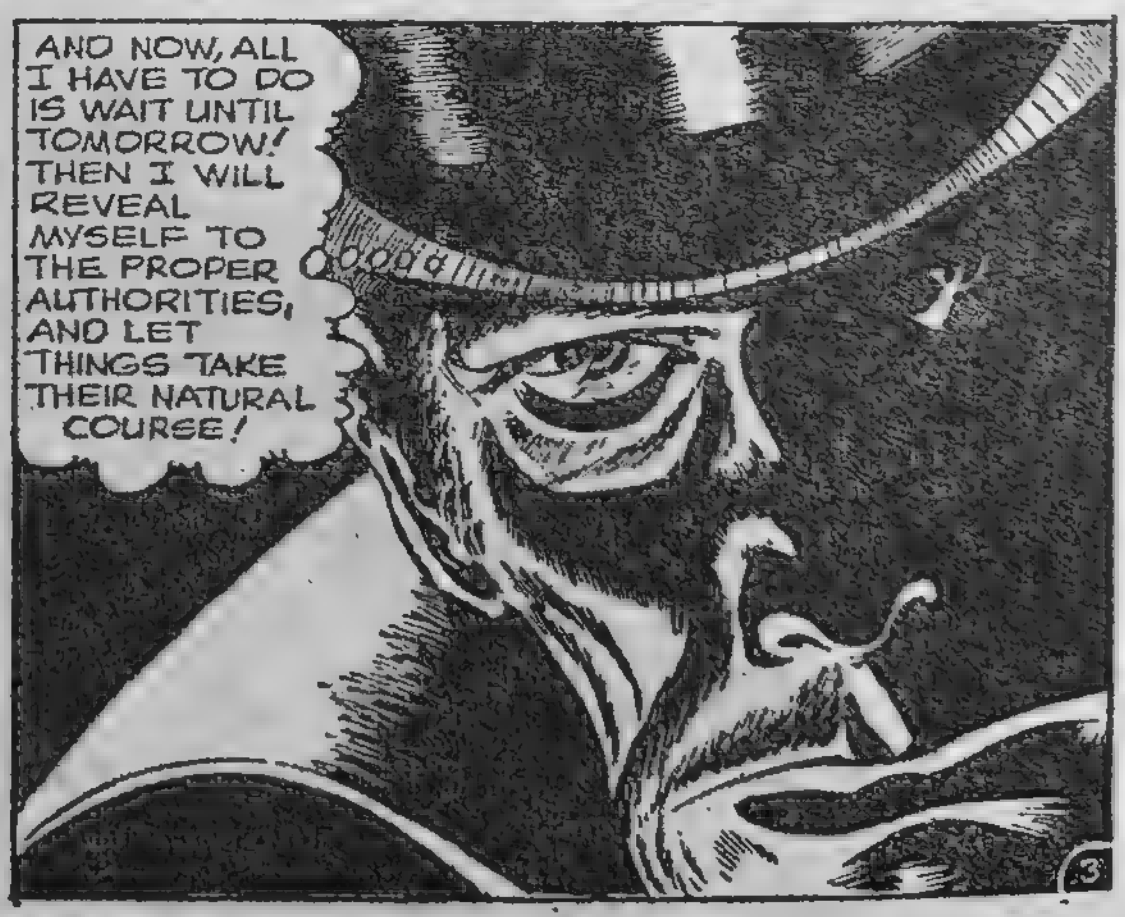


SCHULTZ'S NEXT MOVE WAS TO MAKE A THOROUGH SEARCH OF THE LOCAL LIBRARIES FOR ALL MATERIAL RELATING TO THE DESCENDANTS OF THE ROYAL FAMILIES...

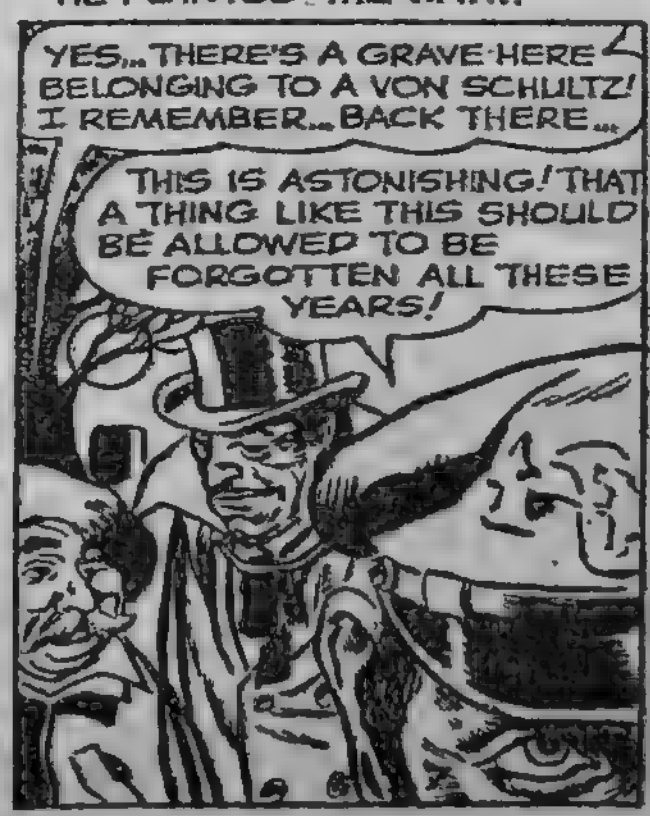


IT TOOK PRECISE TIMING TO AVOID DETECTION BY THE MUSEUM GUARDS AT CLOSING TIME! BUT ONCE THEY LOCKED HIM IN FOR THE NIGHT, HE KNEW HE COULD WORK UNDISTURBED...

AFTER LONG HOURS OF CAREFUL, DELICATE WORK ON THE ANCIENT DOCUMENT, SCHULTZ LET OUT A LONG SIGH...



IT CREATED QUITE A FUROR WHEN SCHULTZ APPEARED AT THE PALACE AND PRESENTED HIS CREDENTIALS TO THE PRIME MINISTER! AN IMMEDIATE CONFERENCE WAS CALLED...



WHAT ABOUT THE LEGENDS WE'VE HEARD... ABOUT HOW THE ENTIRE LINE DIED OFF DURING THE WARS?
OBVIOUSLY THERE WAS ONE WHO MANAGED TO ESCAPE! AND THIS IS HIS DESCENDANT!

WELL, ARE YOU SATISFIED I'M INDEED THE TRUE DESCENDANT OF THAT BRANCH OF THE ROYAL FAMILY!
YES... THERE'S NO DOUBT ABOUT IT! THE QUESTION IS... WHAT DO WE DO?

THERE IS ONLY ONE THING TO DO! I AM YOUR TRUE MONARCH! IT MUST BE PROCLAIMED TO THE PEOPLE!
OH, NO!
WE COULDN'T DO THAT!

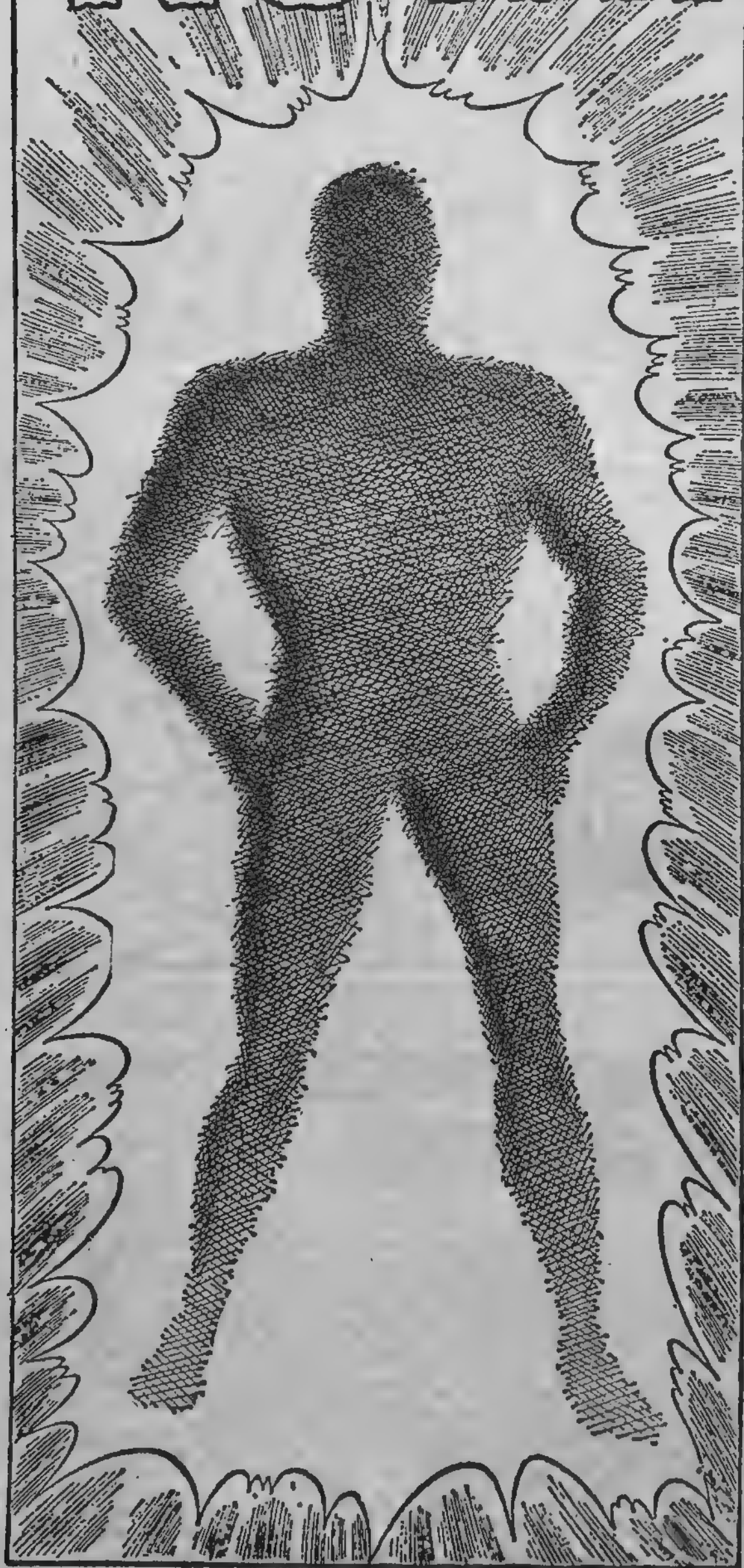
WHAT DO YOU MEAN? I AM THE RIGHTFUL KING! I MUST ASCEND MY THRONE! I WILL LEAD OUR NATION TO GLORY!
THAT'S ABSOLUTELY IMPOSSIBLE!
MARK... I THINK HE DOESN'T KNOW ABOUT THE ANCIENT LEGEND REGARDING HIS FAMILY!

ANCIENT LEGEND? WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? WHY DO YOU LOOK AT ME LIKE THAT? WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?
YOU'LL HAVE TO FORGIVE US, SIRE!
IT'S FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE NATION! WE HAVE NO CHOICE!

SUDDENLY, KURT SCHULTZ REMEMBERED SOMETHING HE HAD ONCE READ AND FORGOTTEN! IT DIDN'T SEEM POSSIBLE THAT HE HAD FORGOTTEN ANY DETAILS... BUT THERE WAS ONE THING...
NO! NO! WAIT! DON'T TOUCH ME! THERE'S BEEN A MISTAKE!
WE'RE VERY SORRY TO HAVE TO DO THIS!

I WOULDN'T HAVE BELIEVED THAT ANY OF THAT LINE COULD HAVE SURVIVED THE PURGE! I THOUGHT THEY WERE WIPED OUT!
WELL, HE WAS THE LAST! NO ONE ELSE WILL HAVE TO KNOW THERE WAS EVER A BRANCH OF THE RULING FAMILY THAT WERE WEREWOLVES!
THE END

HE CAME FROM NOWHERE!



BY MORNING, THE ESCAPED CONVICT IS TIRED AND HUNGRY...
THERE'S A COUPLE OF HOBOES WITH SOME GRUB! THEY'LL PROBABLY GIMME SOME...

...BUT WHY SHOULD I SETTLE FOR SOME, WHEN I CAN HAVE ALL OF IT?!

AT THAT MOMENT...
HEY! WHAT'S THAT???
5

IT'S SOME KINDA LIGHT! IT'S GETTING B-BRIGHTER!

IT'S SO BRIGHT THAT I CAN'T -- I CAN'T LOOK AT IT!

IT'S DIMMING NOW! B-BUT IT'S CHANGING! INTO -- INTO --

-- INTO A MAN!!

WHAT IS IT? SOME KINDA GAG? A TRICK? THINGS LIKE THIS CAN'T HAPPEN! THEY JUST CAN'T!
OH, BUT THEY CAN HAPPEN! NOT OFTEN, I ADMIT! BUT NEVERTHELESS, THEY DO HAPPEN!

YOU'RE TALKING! THEN YOU'RE REAL! I AIN'T JUST SEEIN' THINGS!
MY NAME IS GROFF! I COME FROM-- THE FUTURE!!
WHO ARE YOU?? WHERE DO YOU COME FROM??

THE FUTURE?? BUT THE FUTURE AIN'T HAPPENED YET! THAT IS—I MEAN—HOW—HOW DID YOU GET FROM THERE TO HERE??!
THIS RING HAS FANTASTIC POWERS! BY MERELY RUBBING IT, A PERSON LEAVES ONE SEGMENT OF TIME AND ENTERS ANOTHER!

IT DON'T MAKE SENSE! IT'S CRAZY! AND YET, I JUST SAW IT HAPPEN! I....
WAIT A MINUTE...IF THIS JOKER CAME INTO THE PRESENT, I CAN GO INTO THE FUTURE! THEN THE COPS COULD NEVER CATCH ME AND SEND ME BACK TO STIR!
BUT FIRST I BETTER CHECK UP ON A COUPLE OF THINGS!

LOOK, TELL ME SOMETHING ABOUT THE FUTURE! WHAT'S IT LIKE?
WHAT ABOUT FOOD? DOES EVERYONE HAVE ENOUGH TO EAT?
IT IS A WONDERFUL PLACE! SCIENCE HAS MADE EVERYTHING PERFECT! EVEN THE WEATHER IS SCIENTIFICALLY CONTROLLED!
MORE THAN ENOUGH!

AND WORK...WHAT KIND OF JOBS ARE THERE?
NOBODY HAS TO WORK! ALL THE WORK IS DONE BY MACHINERY!
MAN, IT SOUNDS TERRIFIC!

YOU MIGHT ALSO BE INTERESTED IN KNOWING THAT THE POPULATION IS ARRANGED SO THAT THERE IS ONE BEAUTIFUL WOMAN FOR EVERY MAN!
THAT DOES IT!
HAVE YOU ANY OTHER QUESTIONS?

NO, PAL... NO QUESTIONS! BUT I GOT A REQUEST...! FORK OVER THAT MAGIC RING! C'MON, GIVE IT TO ME—OR I'LL GIVE YOU SOMETHIN'—OUT OF THIS GUN!
THERE'S NO NEED TO SHOOT...I WILL GLADLY GIVE YOU THE RING! I'VE NO FURTHER USE FOR IT!

THANKS, CHUM! NOW ALL I GOTTA DO IS PUT IT ON AN' RUB IT, HUH?

HEY, IT'S WORKING ALREADY! I'M STARTING TO-- DISAPPEAR!

BUT SUDDENLY, A THOUGHT COMES TO JOE'S MIND...!
SAY, WAIT A MINUTE! IF THE FUTURE'S ALL AS GOOD AS YOU SAY...

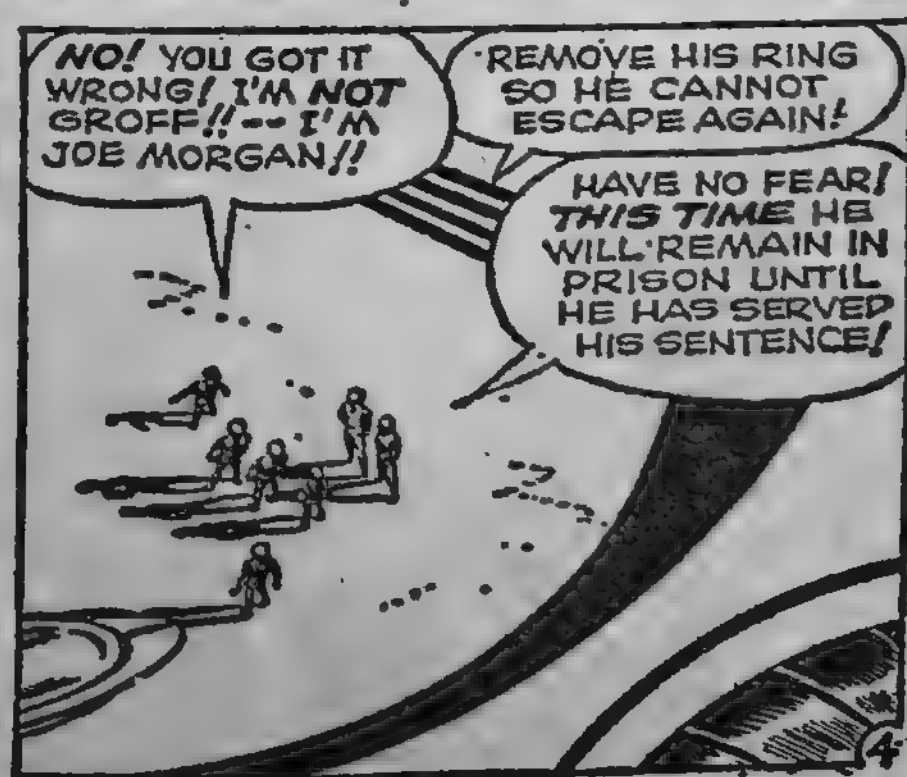
...WHY DID YOU LEAVE THERE??!

BUT BEFORE THE STRANGER CAN ANSWER, JOE IS GONE!--GONE FROM THE REALITY WE CALL THE PRESENT!-- GONE--FOREVER!

AND, IN ANOTHER SPHERE OF TIME...
I'M COMING ALIVE AGAIN--IN--IN THE FUTURE!!

LOOK! OVER THERE!
BEHOLD! IT IS GROFF!
HE HAS RETURNED!
SEIZE HIM!

WHO--WHAT--ARE YOU? WHY DO YOU CALL ME GROFF?? MY NAME IS JOE! JOE MORGAN!!
YOU LIE! WE KNOW YOU ARE GROFF, THE ESCAPED CONVICT!
YOU TRANSFORMED YOURSELF INTO ANOTHER CREATURE, JUST AS ANY OF US CAN DO!
BUT YOUR DISGUISE DOES NOT FOOL US!


NO! YOU GOT IT WRONG! I'M NOT GROFF!!--I'M JOE MORGAN!!
REMOVE HIS RING SO HE CANNOT ESCAPE AGAIN!
HAVE NO FEAR! THIS TIME HE WILL REMAIN IN PRISON UNTIL HE HAS SERVED HIS SENTENCE!

AND SO IT COMES TO PASS...
THIS IS THE ANSWER TO MY QUESTION! THIS IS WHY GROFF LEFT THE FUTURE! WHAT A DUMB FALL GUY I WAS!
TOSS

... NOW I'M STUCK IN ANOTHER PRISON, JUST AS I WAS BACK IN MY OWN TIME! I GUESS NO MATTER WHAT I DO, I CAN'T ESCAPE MY FATE!

MEANWHILE, LET US RETURN TO THE REAL GROFF...
BEFORE I GO OUT AMONG THE HUMANS, I SHALL TAKE ONE LAST LOOK AT MY TRUE FORM!.

THAT POOR MORTAL! HE LEFT SO QUICKLY, I HAD NOT TIME TO TELL HIM THAT...

...THOUGH I TRULY COME FROM THE FUTURE, I DO NOT COME FROM EARTH'S FUTURE!

...I HAVE COME FROM THE PLANET URANUS!!

THE END

DYNAMO

WANTED
LEONARD BROWN
CODE NAME 'DYNAMO'

SUSPICION OF
TREASON

MY NAME IS LEONARD BROWN... YOU WHO KNOW ME AS "DYNAMO" KNOW THAT I'M ONE OF T.H.U.N.D.E.R.'S SUPER-AGENTS, RESPECTED AND TRUSTED BY ALL OF THE TOP PEOPLE AND AGENCIES OF THE WORLD ORGANIZATION... YET, HERE I AM, HUNTED LIKE AN ANIMAL, EVEN BY MY FELLOW AGENTS...

wood

AS FAR AS THUNDER IS CONCERNED, I'M A TRAITOR!

"LET ME TELL YOU ABOUT IT FROM THE BEGINNING... ONE DAY AT THUNDER HQ..
GOOD MORNING! IT'S A... HEY! WHAT..?
WE WERE RAIDED LAST NIGHT! THE AGENTS ON GUARD WERE KNOCKED OUT..

WHOEVER DID IT CAME IN THROUGH THAT WALL...
...AND RIPPED THE VAULTS OPEN! LOOKS LIKE HE DID IT WITH HIS BARE HANDS...

...AND MADE OFF WITH VITAL SECRET DOCUMENTS...
ONLY SOMEONE WITH TREMENDOUS STRENGTH COULD HAVE DONE IT... WHO DO YOU SUPPOSE...?

"I COULD FEEL THE SUSPICION AND DISTRUST SUDDENLY, LIKE A PHYSICAL BLOW, AND SOON AFTERWARD...
BROWN, WE DON'T KNOW WHAT TO THINK! WE HAVE NO DOUBTS ABOUT YOUR CHARACTER...

...BUT ONCE BEFORE, YOU FELL UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF THE FAKE MENTHOR... WE MUST GUARD AGAINST THE POSSIBILITY THAT SOMETHING SIMILAR IS TAKING PLACE AGAIN...
...SO, AS A FIRST STEP WE'RE ASSIGNING A PLAINCLOTHES AGENT TO KEEP AN EYE ON YOU. NOTHING PERSONAL, OF COURSE...
Y-YES, SIR...

"THE AGENT THEY PUT ON ME TURNED OUT TO BE A NICE ENOUGH GUY. BUT, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT NIGHT I HAD A DATE WITH ALICE..."

"IT WENT ON LIKE THAT FOR A FEW DAYS AND NOTHING HAPPENED, AND I BEGAN TO GET PRETTY EDGY! THEN, ONE DAY..."

"THEN I SAW HER! A STRIKING REDHEAD WITH SOMETHING HAUNTINGLY FAMILIAR ABOUT HER...

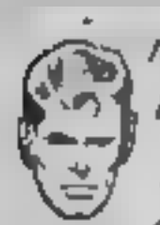
"AS SHE PASSED CLOSE BY, SHE CAUGHT MY EYE AND MURMURED IN A LOW, MUSICAL VOICE...

"I FOLLOWED HER INTO A REVOLVING DOOR, AND WHEN MARLOWE TRIED TO FOLLOW US...

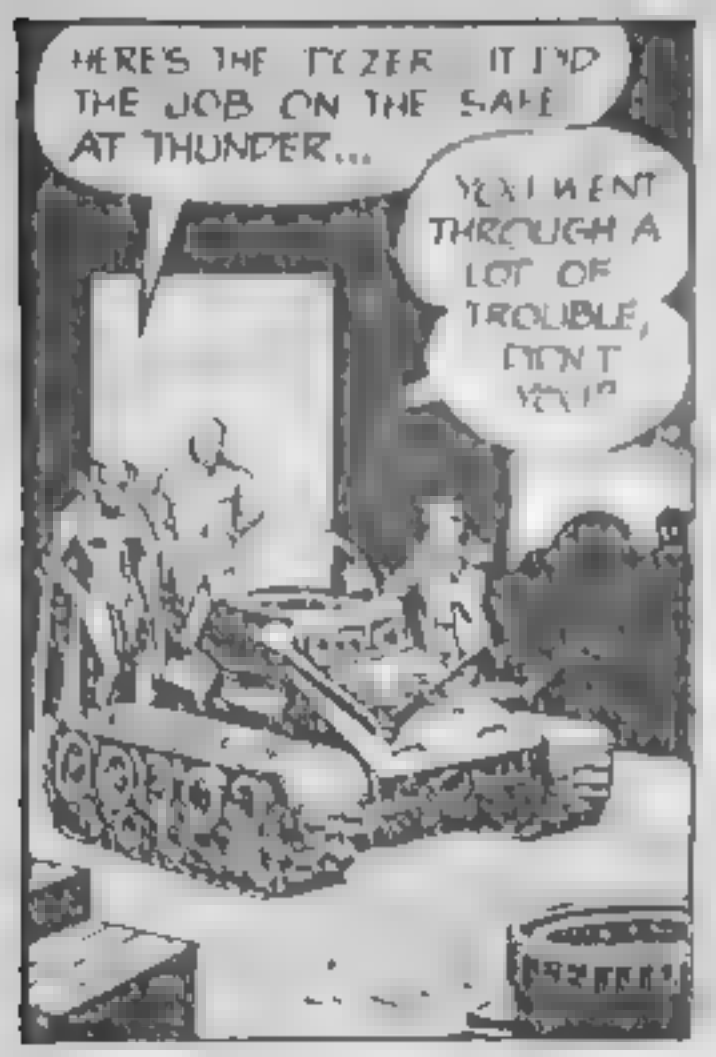
"... SHE TURNED BACK AND STUCK A WEDGE IN THE DOOR, EFFECTIVELY TRAPPING HIM!"

"THAT DID IT! SUDDENLY, AN ALARM WENT OFF IN MY MIND, AND ALL THE PIECES FELL INTO PLACE! I GOT UP..

"BUT AS I ROSE, MY LEGS TURNED TO RUBBER, AND AS THE FLOOR RUSHED UP TO MEET ME...



"WHEN I CAME TO, IT WAS AS THOUGH THE RED ARMY HAD MARCHED THROUGH MY MOUTH IN THEIR SOCKS..."


HERE'S THE DOZER IT DID THE JOB ON THE SAFE AT THUNDER...
YOU'VE BEEN THROUGH A LOT OF TROUBLE, DIDN'T YOU?

AND THERE'S CHARLIE'S REMARKABLE DISFIGUREMENT DON'T YOU THINK? I HOPE YOU DON'T MIND... HE BORROWED YOUR SUIT!
WHAT GOOD WILL THAT DO YOU? HE CAN'T USE THE BELT--YOU KNOW THAT!

I DOESN'T NEED TO USE DOZER AND DO THE WORK! CHARLIE WILL JUST HANG AROUND LONG ENOUGH TO BE SEEN...AND YOUR NAME WILL BE MUD!
BUT WHY

"THE IRON MAIDEN WAS AS GOOD AS HER WORD... WHILE I WAS HELD PRISONER AND THEREFORE HAD NO ALIBI HER GANG WENT TO WORK..
"...AND EACH TIME MY DOUBLE MADE SURE HE WAS SEEN LEAVING THE SCENE, EVEN DOING A PETER PAN LEAP WITH THE AID OF WIRES!

HERE IT IS, BABY.. READ IT AND WEEP!
"WHEN I LOOKED AT THE HEADLINE, I FELT ABSOLUTELY SICK ..HOW COULD I EVER CLEAR MYSELF NOW...?
DAILY TRIBUNE
WALL STREET SPECIAL
WEATHER
NEW YORK, MONDAY, JANUARY 17
DYNAMO WANTED FOR TREASON!

OKAY... YOU'VE SMEARED ME GOOD... BUT WHY?
CAN'T YOU GUESS, HANDSOME? YOU AND I ARE GOING TO TEAM UP! YOU HAVE NO CHOICE NOW... EVERYONE WILL BE AGAINST YOU.

"AND THEN THEY LET ME GO! THEY UNTIED ME AND GAVE ME BACK MY DYNAMO COSTUME...
OKAY.. NOW GET OUT!
OKAY, BUT I DON'T GET IT. WHY?

LOOK! IT'S HIM! THAT GUY DYNAMO!
STAND BACK, EVERYBODY!

STOP! STOP OR I'LL FIRE!
CR-RACK!

WHICH WAY DID HE GO, MIKE?
WELL...

...OFFHAND, I'D SAY HE WENT THAT WAY!

THUNDER! I'LL GO THERE! THEY'LL LISTEN... AND BELIEVE ME!

"I WAS FULL OF BITTERNESS AND RAGE... I WANTED TO LASH OUT AT THEM! AFRAID OF MY OWN VIOLENT FEELINGS, I GOT OUT...FAST!"

THIS IS THE PLACE BUT SHE'S CLEARED OUT...
OF COURSE, SHE COULDN'T TAKE A CHANCE ON ME!

THERE HE IS NOW
BROWN! OVER HERE!
SHE HAD A STAKE-OUT... WATCHING FOR ME TO SHOW UP!

HELLO, IRON M— I MEAN, RUSTY!
HI, LOVER.. I TRUST YOU'VE COME TO THE RIGHT DECISION!

YEAH...I'VE DECIDED TO THROW IN WITH YOU.. WHAT DO YOU HAVE IN MIND?
CAN I TRUST YOU? ARE YOU REALLY SINCERE...OR COULD YOU BE TRYING TO CAPTURE ME TO CLEAR YOUR NAME...?

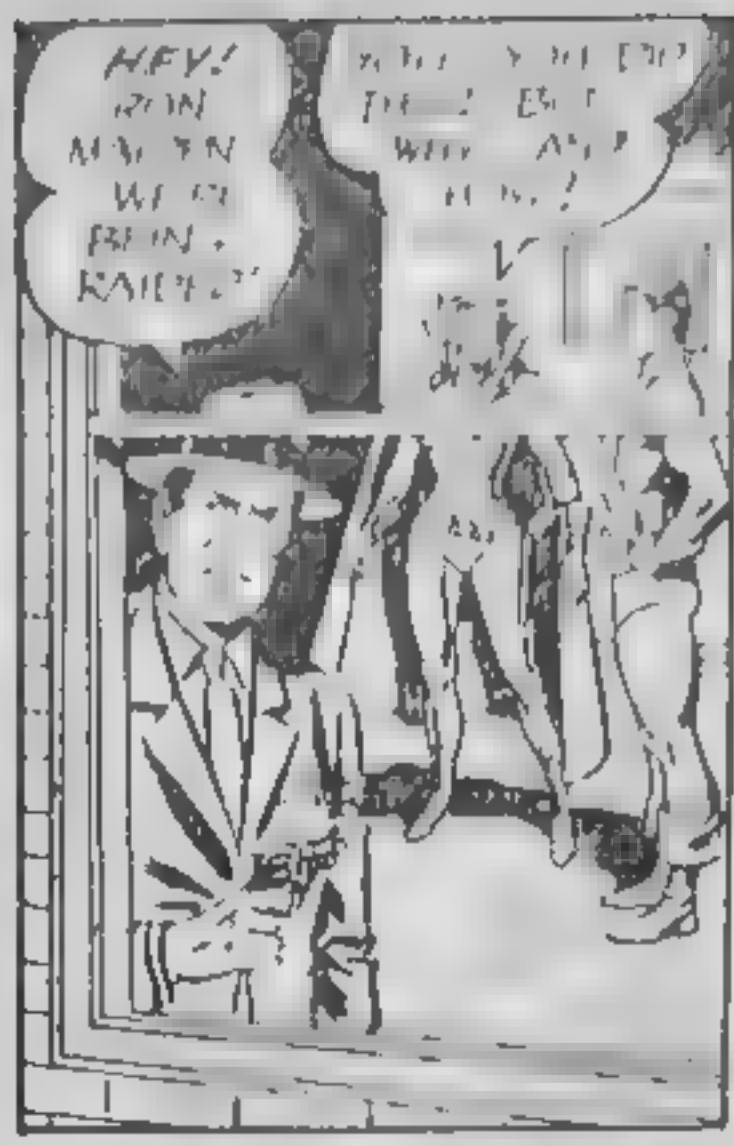
NO, HONEST. .I M FED UP WITH THUNDER! THOSE DIRTY, ROTTEN INGRATES! AFTER I'VE RISKED MY LIFE, TIME AND AGAIN...
I M ALMOST INCLINED TO BELIEVE YOU PRETTY ROUGH ON YOU, EH?

YEAH.. I'VE GOT TO HAND IT TO YOU! THAT WAS SOME NEAT FRAME YOU HUNG ON ME!
YES... SORRY ABOUT THAT, BUT IT WAS NECESSARY. TO SHOW YOU THE ERROR OF YOUR WAYS!

YOU HAVE! I'VE DECIDED TO PUT MY POWER TO GOOD USE.. FOR MYSELF!
I'M BEGINNING TO LIKE YOU BETTER ALL THE TIME... IT'S YOU AND ME AGAINST THE WORLD!

WAIT A MINUTE... I SAID I'D JOIN YOU..I DIDN'T SAY I LOVE YOU! I CAN HAVE ANY GIRL I WANT!
OHH! YOU MAKE ME SO MAD SOMETIMES... I COULD KILL YOU... OR KISS YOU...

I THINK WE'VE HEARD ENOUGH! LET'S MOVE IN!


HEY! RON MANN WE'RE BEING RAIDED!

DAB

I DON'T EVEN NEED MY BELT TO HANDLE THESE... OW!
HA! DIDN'T KNOW WE HAD ARMOR UNDER OUR CLOTHES, DID YOU, WISE GUY?
KLONG!

YOU MAY HAVE AN RON SUIT BUT YOU STILL HAVE A GLASS JAW!
SPLAT!

SHOOT HIM!
TOO LATE! HE'S TURNED THE DIAL!

CRACK!

HOW DO YOU LIKE THAT?! THEY'VE ALL GONE TO SLEEP... MUST HAVE BEEN BORED WITH MY COMPANY!
TELL ME, RUSTY DID YOU REALLY THINK IT WOULD BE THAT EASY TO MAKE ME TURN CROOK?

NO.. I KNEW IT WAS A GAMBLE WHICH I TOOK DELIBERATELY IT WOULD'VE BEEN LOVELY IF IT HAD WORKED OUT!
AS FOR MY MEN, IT DOESN'T MATTER I CAN RECRUIT MORE! AU REVOIR, LEN! YOU'LL NEVER BE RID OF ME

STOP! STOP OR I'LL SHOOT!
YOU WON'T TAKE ME ALIVE!
POW!

OOPS!
POW!
POW!
ZANG!

SHE'S GONE!
YOU LET HER GET AWAY! YOU DID THAT ON PURPOSE!

SHE SAVED YOUR LIFE IN THE STRONGHOLD OF DOCTOR DEATH! THAT WOULDN'T HAVE ANY BEARING ON WHAT JUST HAPPENED, WOULD IT?
I... I TRIPPED, SIR...
ANYWAY, I'M SORRY WE DOUBTED YOU, BROWN... BUT YOU'RE CLEARED NOW...

OKAY, IRON MAIDEN... THE SCORE'S EVEN! NEXT TIME WE MEET, YOU WON'T BE CONTENDING WITH LEONARD BROWN, THE MAN, BUT DYNAMO THE THUNDER AGENT!
THE END

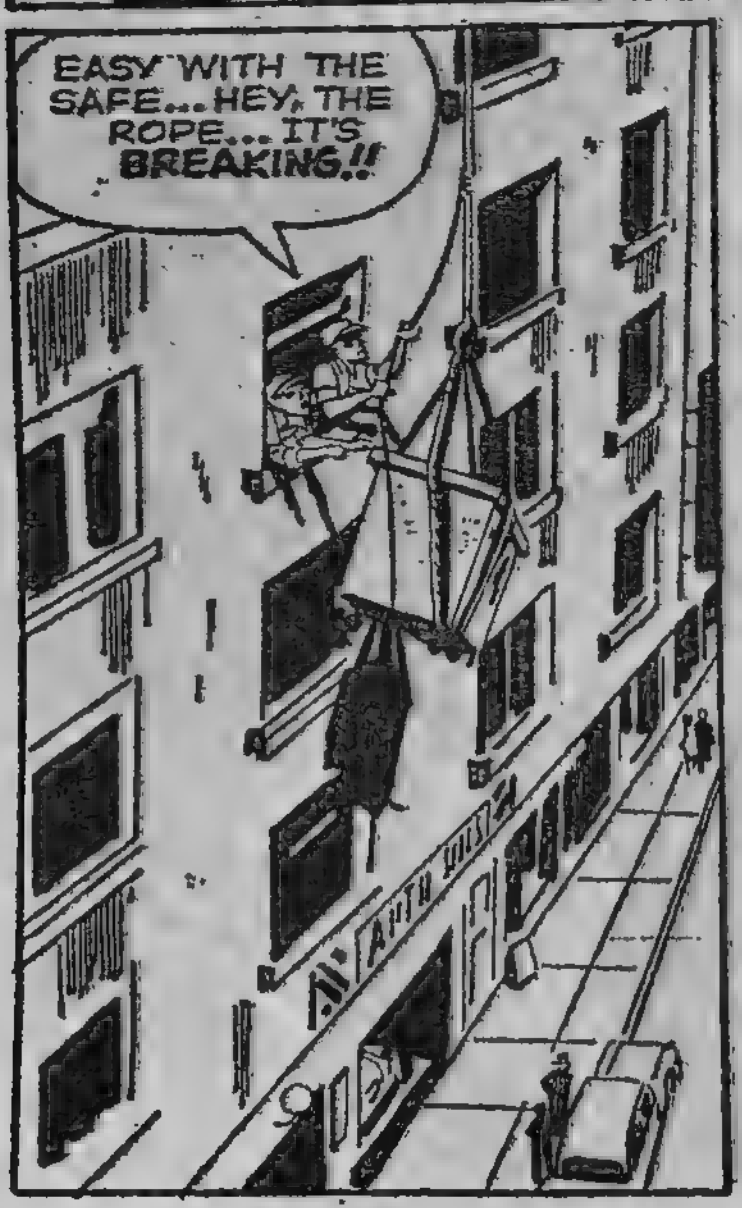
SEVEN LONG YEARS

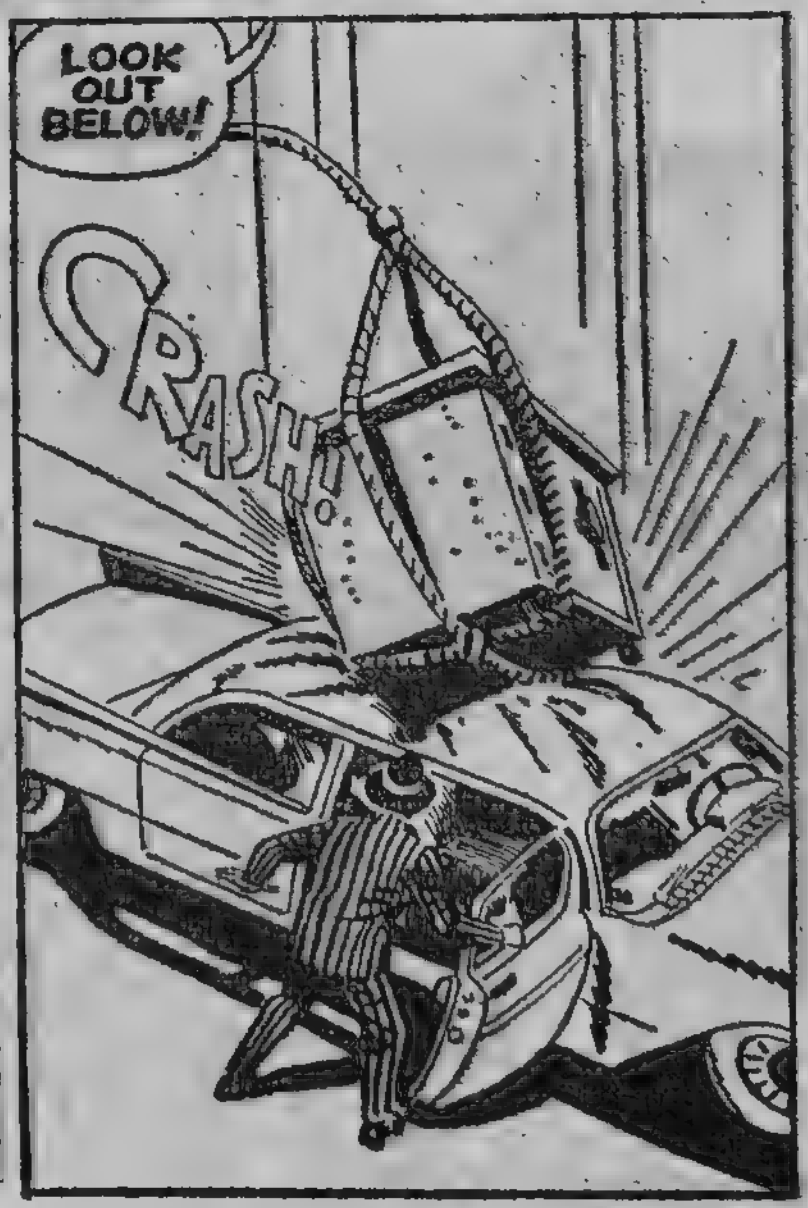
AS HE GAPES AT THE SHATTERED MIRROR, VINCE JORDAN'S FACE TAKES ON A LOOK OF SHEER HORROR...
I-- I BROKE THE MIRROR!
SO WHAT, BOSS! HE CAN BUY HIMSELF ANOTHER ONE!
Y'DON'T GET IT! I BROKE A MIRROR! THAT MEANS I'M GONNA HAVE SEVEN YEARS BAD LUCK!

HEY, IS HE ON THE LEVEL?
YEAH! IT'S HIS ONE WEAKNESS! HE'S SUPER-STITIOUS!
SEVEN YEARS!—GASP— EIGHTY-FOUR MONTHS OF BAD LUCK!

HIS MISSION FORGOTTEN, THE FRIGHTENED HOODLUM NERVOUSLY RETURNS TO HIS HOME!
I'VE GOTTA GO STRAIGHT FOR THE NEXT SEVEN YEARS!
MY LINE OF WORK IS RISKY ENOUGH IF YOU'RE LUCKY... BUT NOW--!!

BUT "GOING STRAIGHT" IS HARD FOR VINCE! HE BECOMES MOODY--DEPRESSED! TO RAISE HIS SPIRITS, HE DECIDES TO BUY A NEW CAR!
HERE'S THE DOUGH! I'LL DRIVE HER OUT NOW!
YES SIR! HERE ARE THE KEYS! SHE'S YOURS!


EASY WITH THE SAFE... HEY, THE ROPE... IT'S BREAKING!!


LOOK OUT BELOW!
CRASH!

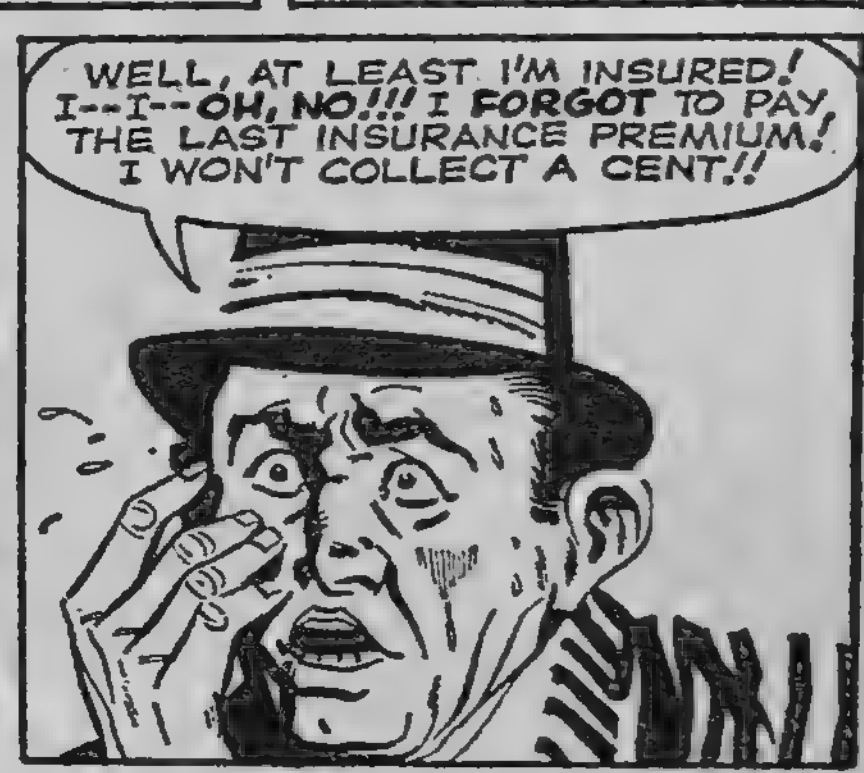
MY CAR! IT'S--IT'S RUINED!!

SO ALREADY MY BAD LUCK HAS BEGUN! I WONDER WHAT'S GONNA HAPPEN NEXT TO ME??
RR AAAARRRR

THEY'RE HEADING DOWN MY STREET! MY STREET!! THEN IT COULD BE MY HOUSE!!
RRRRAAARRRR

MAYBE I'M WRONG-- MAYBE IT AIN'T MY HOUSE...

BUT, ALAS...
(GASP) IT IS MY HOUSE! IT'S BURNED TO THE GROUND!


WELL, AT LEAST I'M INSURED! I--I--OH, NO!!! I FORGOT TO PAY THE LAST INSURANCE PREMIUM! I WON'T COLLECT A CENT!!

FIRST MY NEW CAR! NOW MY HOUSE! I JUST GOTTA DO SOMETHING TO BREAK THIS SPELL OF BAD LUCK! WAIT, I'VE GOT AN IDEA! THE RACE TRACK! MAYBE THAT'S THE ANSWER!

I'LL BET ON EVERY HORSE IN THE RACE! THAT WAY I'M BOUND TO PICK THE WINNER...AND AS SOON AS I CASH IN ON HIM, I'LL HAVE BROKEN MY JINX!
10.00
2.00 WIN

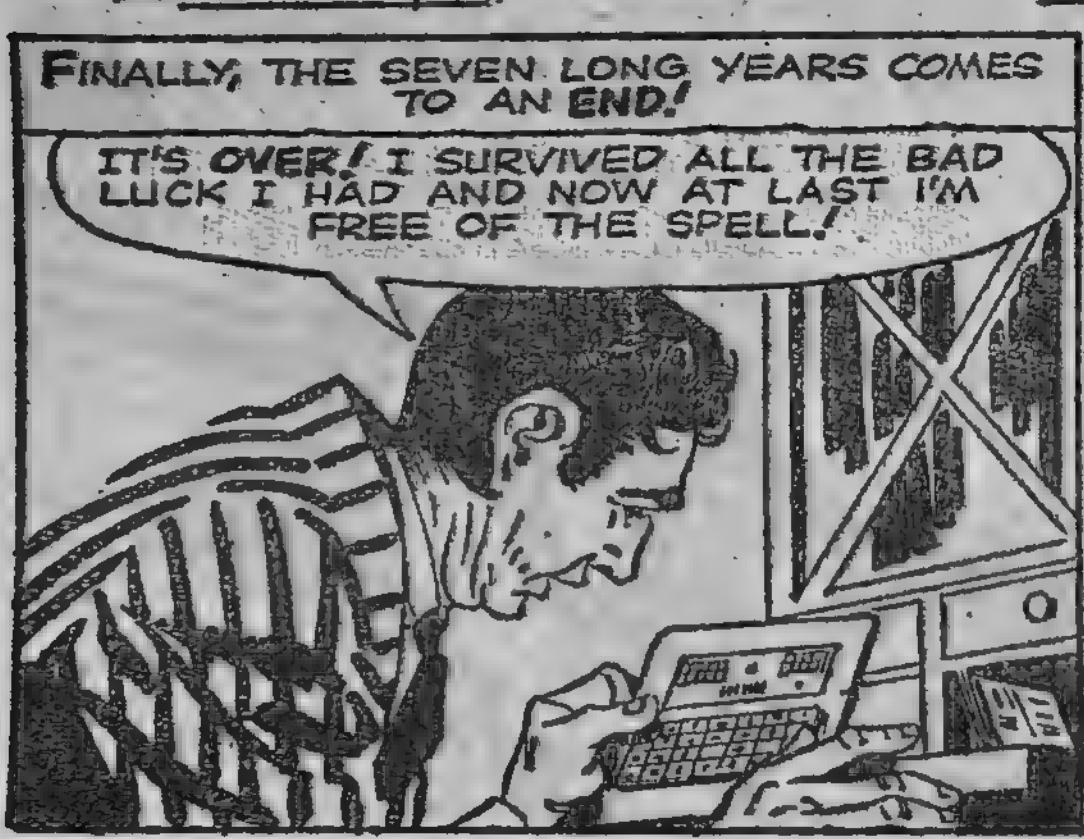
EVERYONE'S CHEERING A DIFFERENT HORSE, BUT TO ME IT DOESN'T MATTER WHICH NAG WINS, 'CAUSE I'VE GOT TICKETS ON 'EM ALL!

--AND THE WINNER IS BLUE BOY, BY A NOSE!!
BLUE BOY, HUH? THAT'S FINE! I GOT HIS TICKET RIGHT--HEY, I... I...

I LOST THE TICKETS!!

AND SO IT CONTINUES... WEEK AFTER WEEK...MONTH AFTER MONTH OF SHEER BAD LUCK!
UNFORTUNATE, SLIPPING ON THAT BANANA PEEL!
YEAH!...

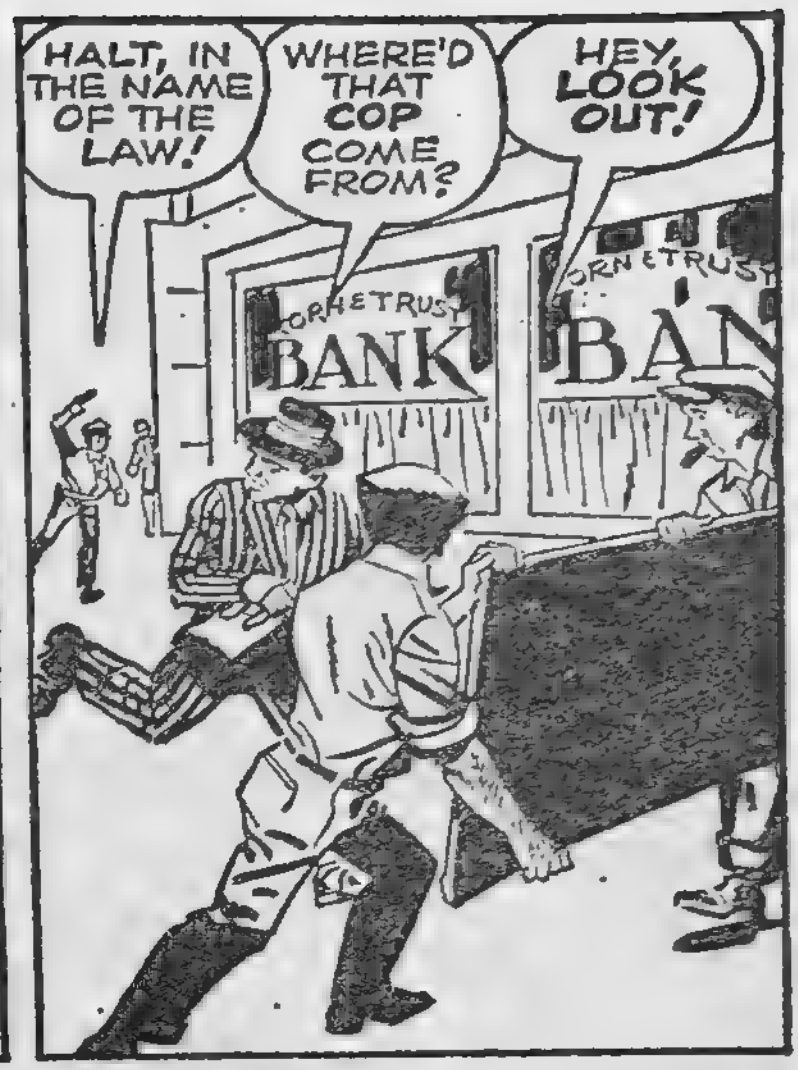
FUNNY, IT'S NEVER RAINED THIS MANY DAYS BEFORE!
I SHOULD'VE FIGURED ANY VACATION I TOOK WOULD TURN OUT THIS WAY!
I HAD A BIG WAD INVESTED WITH THEM! NOW I'VE LOST ALL OF IT!
MAGNUM COMPANY BANKRUPT


FINALLY, THE SEVEN LONG YEARS COMES TO AN END!
IT'S OVER! I SURVIVED ALL THE BAD LUCK I HAD AND NOW AT LAST I'M FREE OF THE SPELL!

NOW I CAN SAFELY RETURN TO MY BUSINESS--CRIME!!

AFTER SEVEN YEARS OF BAD LUCK, VINCE IS IN NEED OF A STAKE, AND, TO HIS WAY OF THINKING, THAT SPELLS A BANK JOB!
HAND OVER THE DOUGH--ALL OF IT--AND FAST!

HELP, POLICE! STOP THAT MAN!!


HALT, IN THE NAME OF THE LAW!
WHERE'D THAT COP COME FROM?
HEY, LOOK OUT!
BANK

CRASH!!

OH, NO! NO!! NOT AGAIN! (SOB) NOT AGAIN!

=SOB= NOT AGAIN!!
HE ALMOST GOT AWAY!
LUCKY FOR US HE RAN INTO THAT MIRROR!

TOO BAD VINCE NEVER LEARNED THAT WE EACH MAKE OUR OWN LUCK IN THIS LIFE!! BUT HE MAY BEGIN TO REALIZE IT IN THE YEARS TO COME, FOR HE'S GOING TO HAVE A LONG TIME TO THINK THINGS OVER!! A SEVEN-YEAR PRISON TERM, TO BE EXACT!!
The End

THE CHARACTER

ALL ABOARD THE BUS OF A THOUSAND SIGHTS! SEE 'EM ALL! THE TOWER OF LONDON, BUCKINGHAM PALACE, SOHO, AN' MORE SIGHTS TOO NUMEROUS TO MENTION!

LONDON TOURS, Limd.

SEE LONDON TOURS

SIGHT-SEEING

THERE ARE *MANY* SIGHT-SEEING BUSES AND *MANY* SIGHT-SEERS IN PRESENT-DAY LONDON, BUT *NONE* EVER SAW THE SIGHTS SEEN BY THOSE WHO BOARDED THE 4:15 FROM PICCADILLY ONE HOT AFTERNOON ...

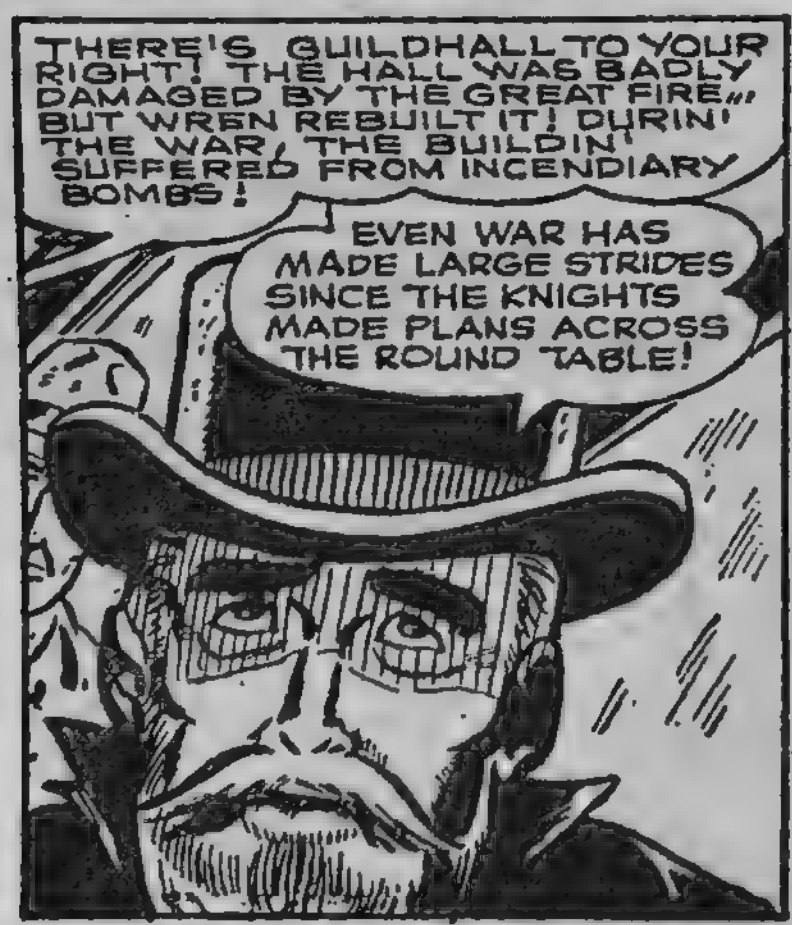
THEN...
LADIES AND GENTS! YOU'RE ABOUT TO SEE ALL THE EXCITING SIGHTS IN LONDON... SO HOLD ON TO YOUR HATS... HERE WE GO!
SEE LONDON
TOURS
SIGHT-SEEING

PRAY TELL ME HOW SOON WE WILL ARRIVE AT SOHO!
DON'T RUSH THE TOUR, MISTER... YOU'LL BE THERE SOON ENOUGH!
EES A FAWNCY TALKIN' GENTLEMAN!

THAT EDIFICE IS BUCKINGHAM PALACE! THE CROWD YOU SEE IS WITNESSIN' THE CHANGIN' OF THE GUARDS!
THE PALACE HAS HAD MANY CHANGES, I OBSERVE!

THERE, FOLKS, STANDS WESTMINSTER ABBEY! BURIED HERE ARE ACTORS, ARCHITECTS, EXPLORERS, MUSICIANS, PAINTERS AN' POETS!
THE WORLD HAS COME A LONG WAY, SINCE THE DAYS OF YORE!

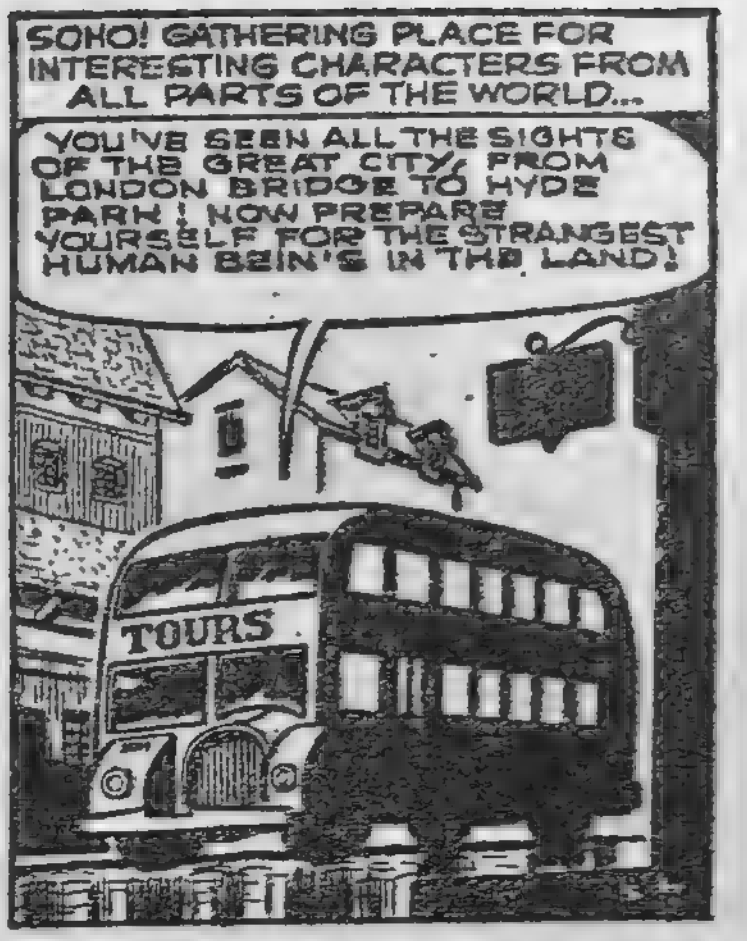
AN' THAT IS ST. PAUL'S! THERE'S BEEN MANY A FIRE AN' MANY A RESTORATION PERFORMED HERE!
YES, YES, IT IS A MARVELOUSLY CONSTRUCTED BIT OF ARCHITECTURE! BUT LET US BE OFF TO SOHO!

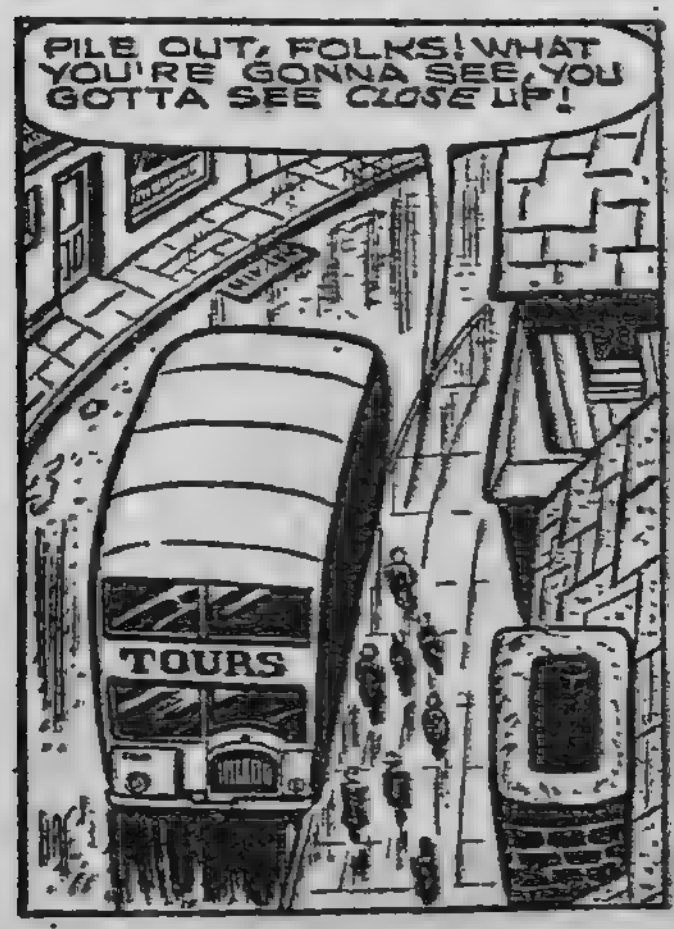

THERE'S GUILDHALL TO YOUR RIGHT! THE HALL WAS BADLY DAMAGED BY THE GREAT FIRE... BUT WREN REBUILT IT! DURIN' THE WAR, THE BUILDIN' SUFFERED FROM INCENDIARY BOMBS!
EVEN WAR HAS MADE LARGE STRIDES SINCE THE KNIGHTS MADE PLANS ACROSS THE ROUND TABLE!

HE'S A QUEER ONE, THAT MAN WITH THE DERBY!
THOSE REMARKS HE'S BEEN MAKING GIVE ME THE CREEPS... TALKS AS IF HE'S FROM OUT OF THE PAST!
SOUNDS MORE LIKE HE'S OUT OF THE BOOBY HATCH!
TOURS

NOBLE DRIVER! IS IT MUCH MORE TO SOHO?
KEEP YOUR SHIRT ON... THIS IS A COMPLETE TOUR... WE SKIP *NOTHING!*

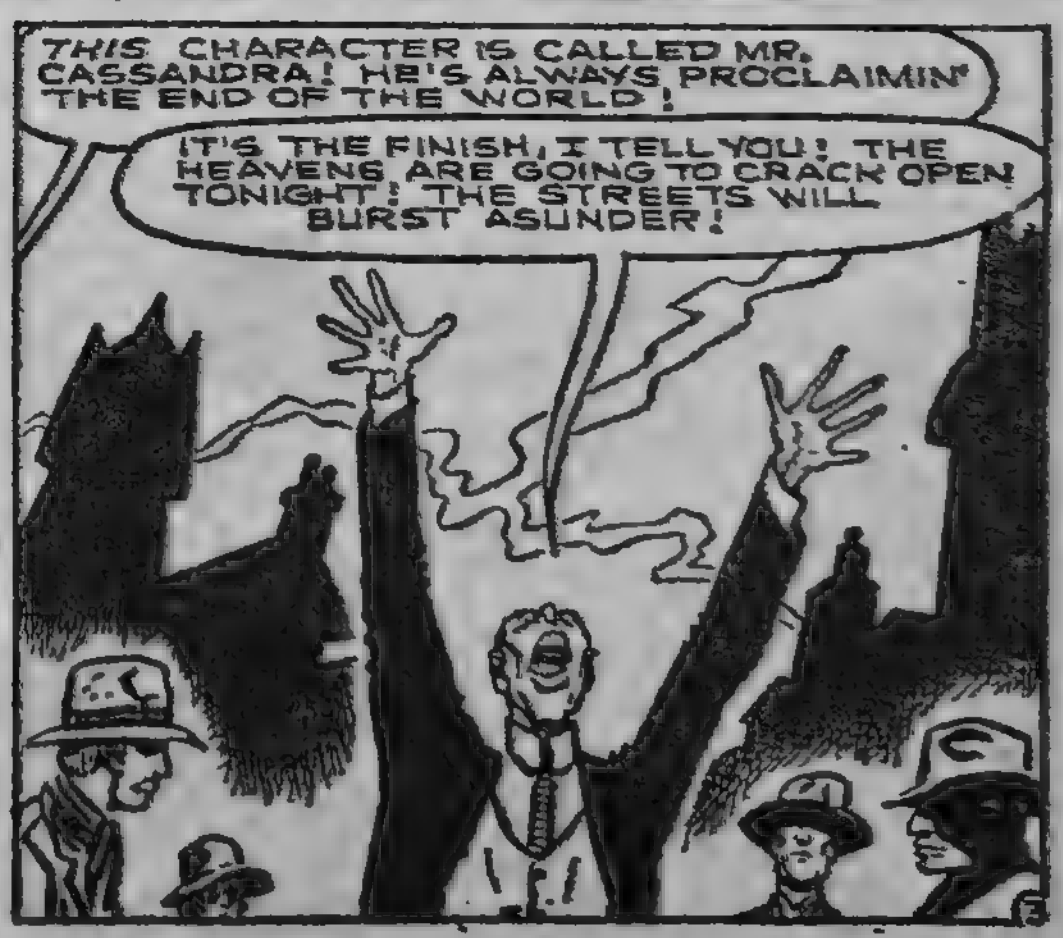
'SIDES, WHAT DO YOU WANT TO SEE THE CHARACTERS OF SOHO FOR? YOU A WRITER OR SOMETHING?
A WRITER? NO, NOTHING AS ROMANTIC AS THAT!


SOHO! GATHERING PLACE FOR INTERESTING CHARACTERS FROM ALL PARTS OF THE WORLD...
YOU'VE SEEN ALL THE SIGHTS OF THE GREAT CITY, FROM LONDON BRIDGE TO HYDE PARK! NOW PREPARE YOURSELF FOR THE STRANGEST HUMAN BEIN'S IN THE LAND!
TOURS


PILE OUT, FOLKS! WHAT YOU'RE GONNA SEE, YOU GOTTA SEE *CLOSE* UP!
TOURS

THERE, MY FRIENDS, YOU SEE OSWALD, KING OF THE HOBOES AN' SOME OF HIS RETINUE!

THAT IS MADAME ZODIAC, QUEEN OF THE GYPSY FORTUNE-TELLERS! SHE NOT ONLY READS YOUR CARDS FOR A SHILLIN', BUT YOUR *MINDS*, TOO!


THIS CHARACTER IS CALLED MR. CASSANDRA! HE'S ALWAYS PROCLAIMIN' THE END OF THE WORLD!
IT'S THE FINISH, I TELL YOU! THE HEAVENS ARE GOING TO CRACK OPEN TONIGHT! THE STREETS WILL BURST ASUNDER!

IT IS NOT THE END! JUST THE BEGINNING! THAT IS WHY I AM HERE!
BOY, WE BROUGHT HIM TO THE RIGHT PLACE!

AH! NOW THERE'S A SIGHT! KING ARTHUR!
THAT MAN IS AN IMPOSTOR! SURELY YOU WOULD KNOW THE REAL KING ARTHUR! I KNOW I WOULD!

SURE...SURE YOU WOULD! BUT WOULD HE KNOW YOU, GOVERNOR?
I SEE THAT YOU DO NOT KNOW YOUR HISTORY!

WOULD THE GREAT KING ARTHUR NOT KNOW HIS MOST LOYAL FRIEND? SURELY YOU ARE JESTING?
OH, BROTHER! THIS GUY IS ONE FOR THE BOOKS!

YOU LADIES AND GENTLEMEN MUST RECOGNIZE ME! LOOK CLOSELY! I AM NOT MERELY AN INHABITANT OF SOHO... IT IS ME... REALLY AND TRULY ME!

YOU SCOFF... YOU DO NOT BELIEVE! THE TRUTH IS BEFORE YOU, AND YOU ARE BLIND TO IT!

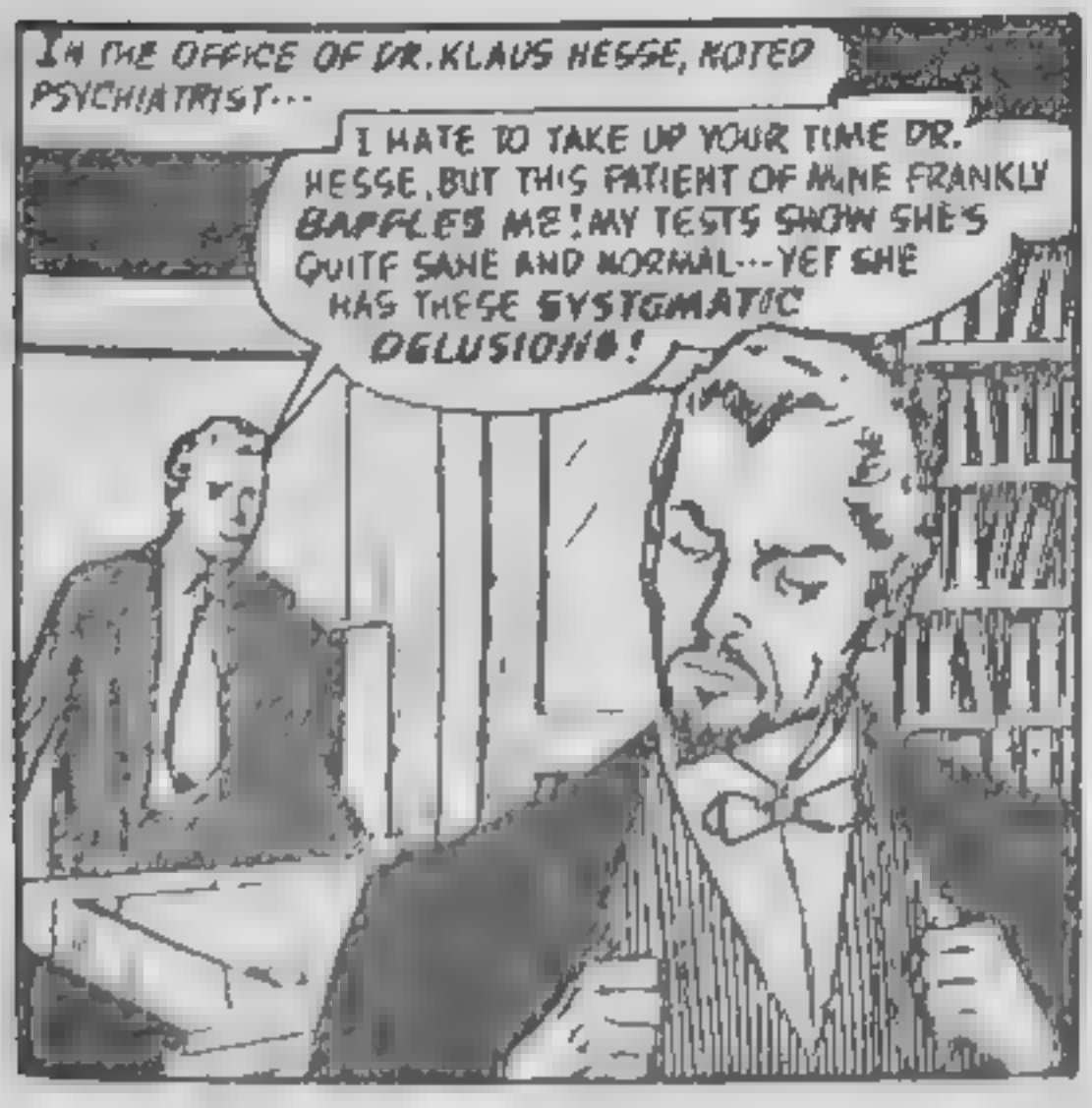
IT IS USELESS! THESE MEN ARE FOOLS! THEY CANNOT RECOGNIZE THE FACT WHEN IT STARES THEM IN THE FACE!
C'MON! THIS CHARACTER IS WHERE HE BELONGS!

I SEE THE WORLD IS NOT YET READY FOR ME... BUT WHEN MEN ARE READY TO GIVE ME THE HONOR I RECEIVED AT THE COURT OF KING ARTHUR, MERLIN WILL RETURN AGAIN!
THE END
4

SYSTEMATIC DELUSIONS

STOP THE LAUNCHING! AN EARTHLING HAS DISCOVERED OUR PLANS---AND MUST BE DEALT WITH!

TO ALL OUTWARD APPEARANCE, BETTY HANSON WAS AN ORDINARY GIRL! AND WHEN THE STRANGE TRANCES SUDDENLY SEIZED HER, SCIENCE COULD ONLY CONCLUDE THAT HER SANITY WAS IN PERIL! BUT WAS HER BRAIN DAMAGED?... OR DID HER DELUSIONS PORTEND THE TRUTH?



AN---INVASION FROM SPACE?!--- ER---THAT IS RATHER INTERESTING!
THEN YOU WILL SEE HER? FINE!

THE PRETTY YOUNG PATIENT WAS FAR TOO UPSET TO NOTICE THAT THE EMINENT DR HESSE WAS HIMSELF UNUSUALLY NERVOUS WHEN SHE FIRST ENTERED THE ROOM, THAT HIS EYES SEARCHED HER NARROWLY---
I DON'T KNOW WHAT GOOD SEEING YOU WILL DO, DOCTOR! YOU'LL PROBABLY THINK I'M MAD TOO!
NOW NOW MY DEAR ---SUPPOSE YOU TELL ME THE STORY FROM THE BEGINNING!

IT ALL STARTED ABOUT TWO MONTHS AGO! YOU SEE, I WAS ALWAYS A GREAT READER OF SCIENCE FICTION---AND ONE DAY WHILE I WAS TYPING AT MY DESK, I SUDDENLY WENT INTO A SORT OF---TRANCE---AND I BEGAN SEEING THINGS!

"ALL OF A SUDDEN, I WAS LOOKING IN ON AN IMPORTANT MEETING ON A FOREIGN PLANET! ALL THE LEADERS WERE THERE, AND THEY WERE DISCUSSING INVASION!"
OUR REPORTS INDICATE THAT EARTH IS RICH IN NATURAL RESOURCES AND AGRICULTURE! IN SHORT, SUITABLE FOR ANNEXATION!

OUR PREPARATIONS ARE ALMOST COMPLETE, AND SOON WE WILL HAVE SUFFICIENT ROCKET CRAFT TO TRANSPORT OUR WHOLE ARMY! DOES THE SUPREME COUNCIL OF PLANET CORYDON APPROVE?
YES!

SOMEHOW, IT WAS ALL THERE BEFORE MY EYES---I DIDN'T EVEN FEEL MY BOSS SHAKING ME---"
BETTY! WHAT'S THE MATTER? YOU—YOU LOOK SO STRANGE!

"THEN, AS SUDDENLY AS IT CAME, THE VISION WAS GONE---"
HUH?--- WHAT HAPPENED?
YOU WERE STARING STRAIGHT AHEAD---LIKE YOU WERE HYPNOTIZED! IS ANYTHING THE MATTER?

"I DIDN'T THINK MUCH OF IT---MAYBE I'D BEEN READING TOO MUCH ABOUT SPACE TRAVEL! BUT A FEW NIGHTS LATER, OUT ON A DATE---

GOSH BETTY, YOU'RE NOT LISTENING! HEY, BETTY-- BETTY! OH MY GOSH--- THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG WITH HER!

FROM THEN ON I STARTED HAVING THOSE TRANCES OFTEN! I GOT TO KNOW ALL ABOUT THE INVASION PLANS! I EVEN LEARNED THE NAME OF THE LEADER OF CORYDON -- THEY CALL HIM THROTON! AND THEN THE STRANGEST THING OF ALL HAPPENED!

YES, GO ON GO ON!

WELL, THE TRUTH IS I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT ASTRONOMY, BUT ONE DAY, ON A HUNCH, I WENT TO AN EXPERT---"

YES, THERE IS A PLANET CALLED CORYDON -- BUT HARDLY KNOWN TO THE PUBLIC! THE THEORY IS THAT IT'S CAPABLE OF SUPPORTING LIFE--- BUT OF COURSE WE CAN'T BE SURE! HOW DO YOU HAPPEN TO BE INTERESTED?

I---I -- OH NO--- THIS CAN'T BE!

THAT'S WHEN I WENT TO SEE DR. WATERS! I NEED HELP---I GET THESE HALLUCINATIONS ALL THE TIME! WHAT CAN IT ALL MEAN?

CALM YOURSELF, MISS HANSON! LEAVE EVERYTHING IN MY HANDS NOW---AND BE BACK HERE TOMORROW!

THE INSTANT SHE LEFT, HESSE SPRANG TO THE TELEPHONE, FRANTICALLY DIALED A NUMBER---

YES! EVERYBODY IS TO MEET AT MY HOME TONIGHT---THE WHOLE OPERATION DEPENDS ON IT!

TOWARDS MIDNIGHT--

NOW THAT EVERYONE'S PRESENT, I'LL COME RIGHT OUT WITH IT-- THERE'S BEEN A LEAK! THIS GIRL, PROBABLY A GOVERNMENT AGENT, CAME INTO MY OFFICE WITH A PHONEY STORY ABOUT DELUSIONS! I DON'T KNOW HER GAME YET! MEANWHILE IT'S ENOUGH TO KNOW THAT SHE'S GOTTEN WIND OF OUR PLANS THROUGH A TRAITOR --SOMEONE HERE!

BUT THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE! WE'VE ALL SPENT YEARS ON EARTH PREPARING THE WAY FOR THE INVASION! WHY SHOULD ONE OF US INFORM?

I DON'T KNOW---BUT THAT'S THE ONLY EXPLANATION! AFTER ALL---HOW ELSE COULD SHE HAVE FOUND OUT?

WHEN EVERYONE LEFT, HESSE PRESSED A SECRET BUTTON IN THE WALL! A PANEL SLID BACK, REVEALING COMPLEX SIGNALING EQUIPMENT···
I'VE GOT TO LET THROTON KNOW ABOUT THIS - THERE'S NO TELLING WHAT DEFENSIVE PLANS THE U.S. GOVERNMENT HAS MADE!
CLICK!

MOMENTS LATER ACROSS THE VAST EMPTY REACHES OF SPACE A DESPERATE MESSAGE FLASHED
HESSE ON PLANET EARTH CALLING THROTON ON CORYDON! COME IN - IMMEDIATELY!

WITH CONTACT ESTABLISHED···
I DON'T KNOW THE TRAITOR··· AND I DON'T KNOW WHY THE GIRL HAS REVEALED THE COUNTER-ESPIONAGE OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT! BUT I ADVISE DELAYING THE OPERATION!
I AGREE! GET TO THE BOTTOM OF THIS WITHOUT FAIL!

BUT EVERYTHING IS PREPARED, YOUR EXCELLENCY! OUR TROOPS ARE AT TOP MORALE!
A FEW DAYS WON'T MATTER! WE'VE GOT TO BE SURE!

WHEN BETTY CAME TO HESSE'S OFFICE NEXT DAY, SHE APPEARED INTENSELY DISTURBED···HE GAVE HER A PILL TO CURB HER ANXIETY···
I···I FEEL MUCH CALMER NOW··· SLEEPY···
I THOUGHT SHE'D BE SUSPICIOUS OF THAT SEDATIVE! I'LL LEARN THE WHOLE STORY NOW!

YES, THE INNOCENT-LOOKING PILL WAS ACTUALLY A TRUTH DRUG, AND AS BETTY FELL UNDER ITS POWER···
NOW, MY DEAR, LET'S DROP THIS SNAM! WHO ARE YOU···AND WHAT'S YOUR GAME?
MY NAME···IS···BETTY HANSON! I AM···A SECRETARY! I HAVE···NO GAME!

AND AS HE QUESTIONED HER FURTHER, SUSPICION GAVE WAY TO AMAZEMENT···
···IN MY LAST TRANCE I SAW THE ROCKET FLEET LEAVING CORYDON! IT WAS ALL···SO REAL!
GREAT SCOTT, SHE'S TELLING THE TRUTH! SHE···SHE MUST BE PSYCHIC! BUT NOW I KNOW WE HAVE NOTHING TO FEAR!

WHEN THE DRUG WORE OFF, BETTY REMEMBERED NOTHING OF WHAT HAD TRANSPIRED ---

AM I --- IS THERE SOMETHING WRONG WITH MY BRAIN?

DON'T WORRY ABOUT A THING, MISS HANSON! BUT FROM NOW ON, I WANT YOU TO VISIT ME ***EVERY DAY!***

BUT NOW HE FELT SAFE IN FLASHING THE GO AHEAD TO HIS SUPERIOR FAR OUT IN SPACE ---

A PRETTY SIGHT, YOUR EXCELLENCY!

THE GREATEST INVASION FORCE EVER ASSEMBLED ANYWHERE IN THE UNIVERSE! AND IN EXACTLY 23 DAYS IT WILL REACH ITS ***DESTINATION!***

TAKEOFF! AND WHILE THE MIGHTY ROCKET-BORNE ARMY STREAKED TOWARDS ITS UNSUSPECTING TARGET ---

--- DR. KLAUS HESSE WAS BROODING OVER THE MYSTERIOUS CASE OF BETTY HANSON'S DELUSIONS!

STRANGE --- SHE SAID SHE SAW THE INVASION FLEET LEAVING -- BUT THAT WAS BEFORE IT ACTUALLY ***DID!*** IS SHE CAPABLE OF READING THE ***FUTURE*** TOO?

HIS PROFESSIONAL CURIOSITY AROUSED, HE LISTENED INTENTLY TO HER DAILY ACCOUNTS OF THE EVER MORE FREQUENT SEIZURES ---

AND --- AND EVEN THOUGH I KNOW IT'S NOT REAL --- ***I'M TERRIFIED!*** THE EARTH IS ***HELPLESS***, I TELL YOU --- THE FLEET WILL BE HERE IN JUST 16 DAYS!

I CAN'T SLEEP ANY MORE --- I'VE LOST MY JOB TOO! I DON'T KNOW ***WHEN*** THESE TRANCES WILL COME! AND I DREAD THE ONE WHICH WILL SHOW ME HOW THE EARTH IS DESTROYED!

BUT IT'S ALL ***NERVES***, MY DEAR --- NONE OF THIS IS ***REAL!***

AS THE FATAL DAY APPROACHED, HESSE'S MOOD BECAME BUOYANTLY OPTIMISTIC! HE WAS JOVIAL IN ADDRESSING HIS FELLOW CONSPIRATORS ---

YES, COMRADES, IN A FEW DAYS THE CORYDONIANS WILL BE ***HERE!*** AND THE WAY THIS GIRL HAS BEEN READING THE FUTURE LATELY I MAY EVEN FIND OUT IN ADVANCE WHAT SORT OF ***RESISTANCE*** THE FORCE WILL MEET!

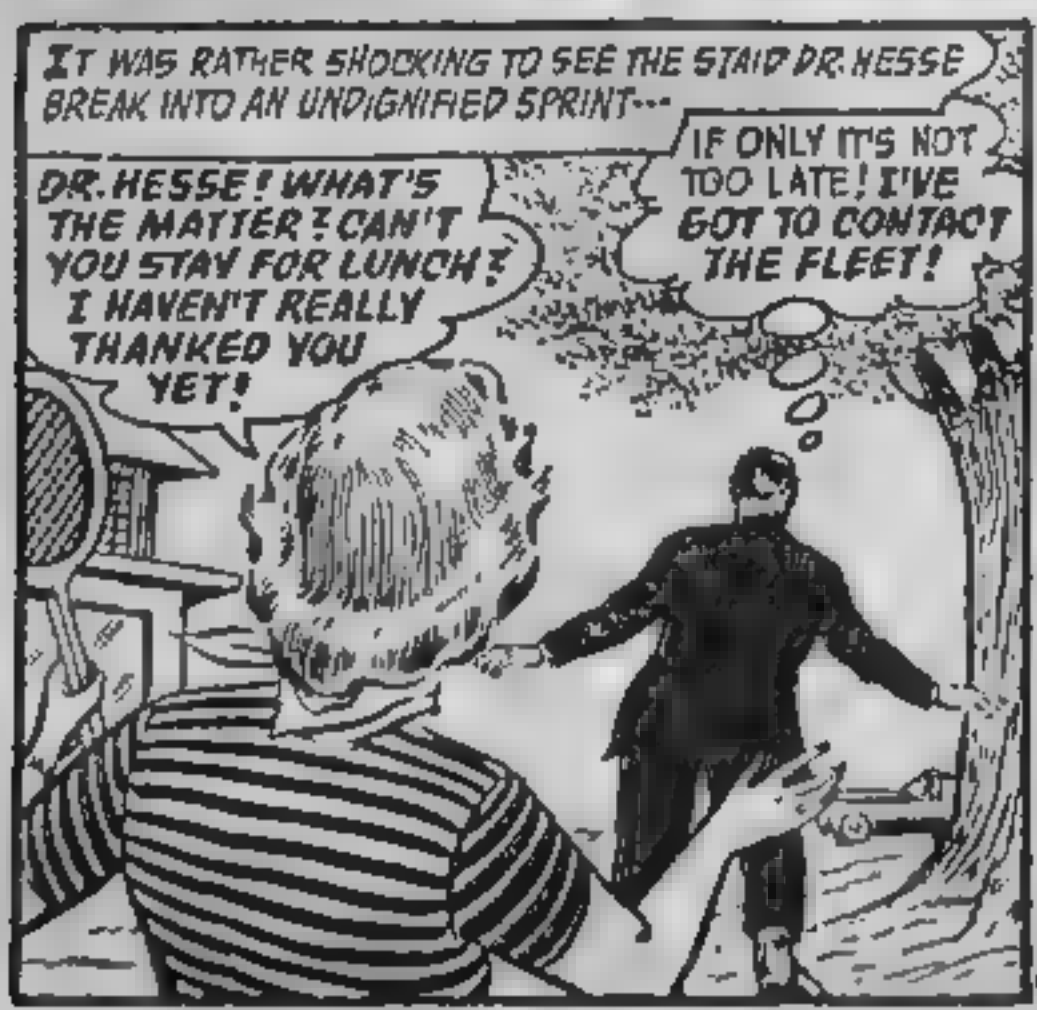
MEANWHILE, WITH EACH PASSING DAY BETTY HANSON CAME NEARER TO A COMPLETE NERVOUS COLLAPSE. WHEN SHE MISSED AN APPOINTMENT, HE IMMEDIATELY CALLED HER HOME.
WHAT'S THAT? MRS. HANSON'S YOUNG PAL GUTTER IS CUSSED? SHE'S GONE AWAY ON VACATION! BUT··· BUT I'VE GOT TO KNOW WHERE SHE IS ·· IMMEDIATELY!

A WAVE OF NERVOUS DREAD SWEPT OVER HANSON AS HE RUSHED TO THE HOUSE WHERE SHE WAS STAYING.
MRS. HANSON! THANK HEAVENS! I MUST GET AHOLD OF YOU!
JUST A SECOND! BE WITH YOU IN A MOMENT!

THE LINES OF WORRY IN HER FACE WERE GONE. SHE LOOKED THE PICTURE OF RADIANT HEALTH.
ALL RIGHT NOW!

I WANTED TO FORGET ALL THAT CRAZY NONSENSE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE! I'M SORRY···I SHOULD HAVE TOLD YOU ABOUT MY LAST TRANCE ···THE ONE WHERE THE WHOLE FLEET WAS DESTROYED BY A STORM OF METEORS IN OUTER SPACE!
WHAT'S THAT?

I FEEL SO FOOLISH TALKING ABOUT IT NOW! IT SEEMS THAT THE WHOLE IMAGINARY FLEET WAS WIPED OUT···AND SOMEHOW I KNOW I WON'T HAVE THESE HALLUCINATIONS AGAIN!
I···I··· EXCUSE ME ··

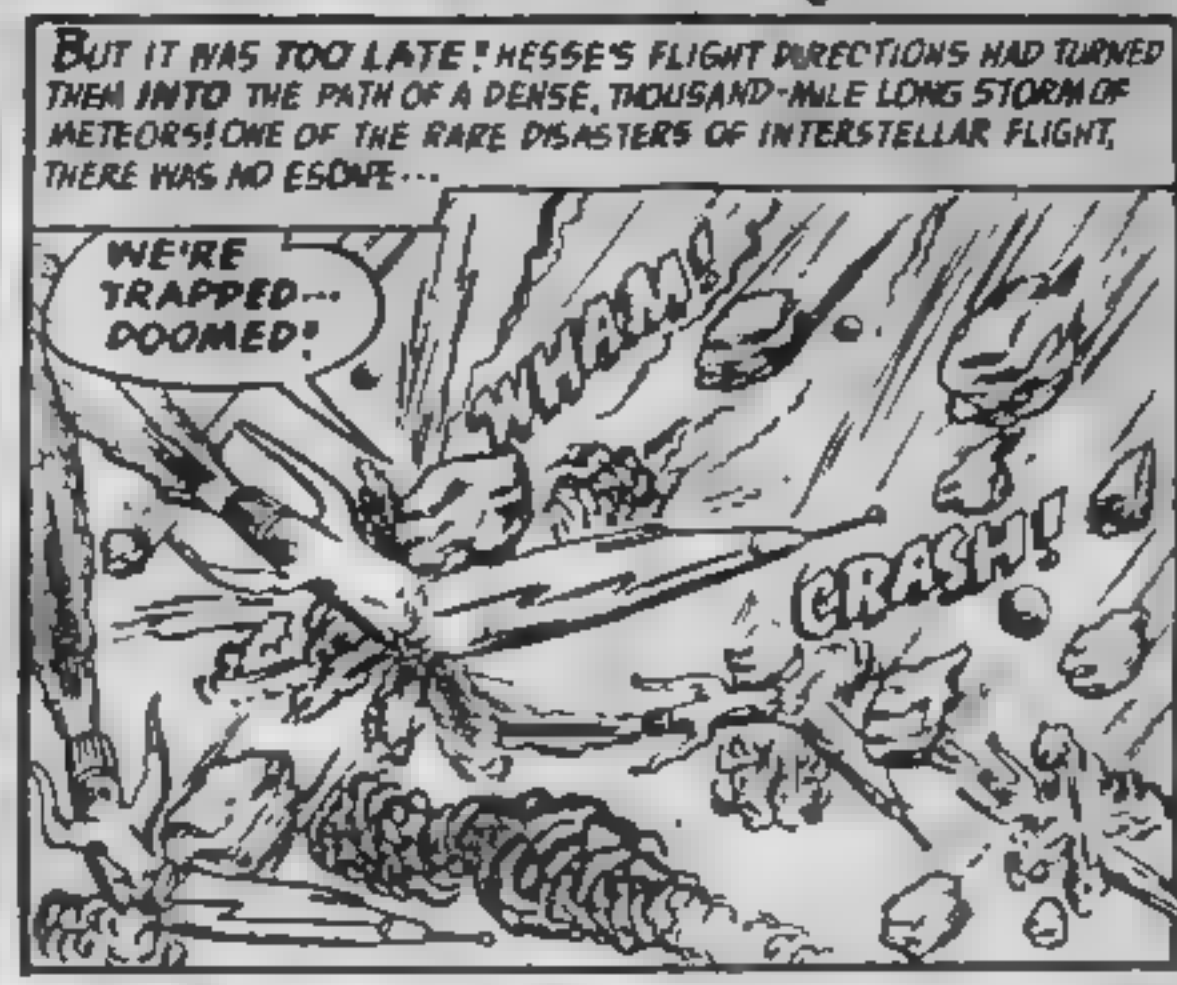

IT WAS RATHER SHOCKING TO SEE THE STAID DR. HESSE BREAK INTO AN UNDIGNIFIED SPRINT···
DR. HESSE! WHAT'S THE MATTER? CAN'T YOU STAY FOR LUNCH? I HAVEN'T REALLY THANKED YOU YET!
IF ONLY IT'S NOT TOO LATE! I'VE GOT TO CONTACT THE FLEET!

HIS FINGERS TWITCHING NERVOUSLY, HESSE SPUN THE DIALS ·· AN AWFUL PREMONITION WITHIN HIM···
HESSE CALLING CORVDON FLEET! COME IN! COME IN! URGENT!

THE ATTACKING FORCE, WITHIN 48 HOURS OF ITS OBJECTIVE, PICKED UP THE MESSAGE--
CONTACT! HESSE TO FLIGHT LEADER! CHANGE COURSE! APPROACH EARTH BY 180 DEGREE AZIMUTH! METEOR SWARM IN PRESENT PATH!
FLIGHT LEADER TO HESSE! AM FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS!

WITHIN 60 SECONDS THE LINE OF FLIGHT WAS CHANGED DRASTICALLY! AS THE VAST ARMADA VEERED--
BUT NOW DOES HESSE KNOW, COMMANDER?
WHO CAN SAY? BUT HE'S NEVER BEEN WRONG BEFORE!

FOR TWO HOURS IT WAS ALL SMOOTH SAILING! THEN, WITHOUT WARNING---
COMMANDER--- LOOK! COMING HEAD ON--- A STORM OF METEORS!
TURN! TURN!


BUT IT WAS TOO LATE! HESSE'S FLIGHT DIRECTIONS HAD TURNED THEM INTO THE PATH OF A DENSE, THOUSAND-MILE LONG STORM OF METEORS! ONE OF THE RARE DISASTERS OF INTERSTELLAR FLIGHT, THERE WAS NO ESCAPE---
WE'RE TRAPPED--- DOOMED!
WHAM!
CRASH!

ON CORYDON --
WE HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO CONTACT THE FLEET FOR HOURS! IT LOOKS LIKE NOT A SHIP ESCAPED!
RECALL HESSE AND HIS MEN! NO SENSE EVEN THINKING ABOUT INVADING THE EARTH NOW - IT'LL TAKE DECADES TO OVERCOME THIS CATASTROPHE!

OBEYING ORDERS, THE BAND OF CONSPIRATORS BOARDED THE ROCKET WHICH HAD BROUGHT THEM TO EARTH - AT A HIDDEN LANDING SITE --
WE'VE FAILED! YOU KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS!
I - I DON'T UNDERSTAND! I JUST DON'T UNDERSTAND!

AS FOR BETTY HANSON, HER DELUSIONS WERE A THING OF THE PAST! SHE HAD NO WAY OF KNOWING HOW GREAT A PART SHE HAD PLAYED IN THE HISTORY OF OUR PLANET-- NOR THAT SHE WAS A TRUE HEROINE! HER STRANGE CLAIRVOYANCE HAD SAVED THE WORLD FROM DESTRUCTION!
GOSH THIS JOB SURE IS DULL! WHY DOESN'T ANYTHING EXCITING EVER HAPPEN TO ME?
THE END

THE FACE!
Stan Lee + S. DITKO
V-481
1

INDIA! LAND OF MYSTERY, LAND OF ENCHANTMENT, LAND OF...STRANGE LEGENDS, SUCH AS THIS ONE...
A CLOUD COVERS THE MOON! GOOD! IT WILL ALSO COVER MY THEFT TONIGHT!

THEY SAID NONE CAN STEAL THE SACRED RUBY AND ESCAPE! HAH! THIS WILL BE CHILD'S PLAY FOR ME!

THERE IT IS!!
MINE FOR THE TAKING!

I'VE PLANNED THIS ROBBERY FOR MONTHS, BUT THE RUBY IS WORTH IT! IT MUST BE PRICELESS!

FOOL!! DO NOT TOUCH THE SACRED RUBY!
HUH?!!

NONE MAY STEAL THE ANCIENT GEM!! YOU CAN NEVER ESCAPE THE WRATH OF THE GODS!
YES, AGED ONE! SO I HAVE HEARD!

BUT TIME IS RUNNING OUT!
I'LL WORRY ABOUT IT LATER!!

ANCIENT CURSES...ENCHANTED STONES... RUBBISH!! ONCE I'M SAFELY OUT OF INDIA I WON'T HAVE A WORRY IN THE WORLD!

HAH! A FEW OLD LAMAS SURE WON'T BE ABLE TO PUT UP MUCH OF A CHASE!

SO! THE EVIL ONE DARED TO SEIZE THE SACRED GEM!!
NOW WILL HE FEEL OUR WRATH!

DON'T HEAR ANYONE FOLLOWING!
GUESS IT'S SAFE TO REST FOR A WHILE AND TAKE ANOTHER LOOK AT THE RUBY!

HEY!! WHA--??

THE LAMA!! NO-- NO!!

I MUST HAVE BEEN SEEING THINGS! GOT TO GET BACK TO CIVILIZATION... FAST!

FINALLY, LONG FRANTIC HOURS LATER...
AT LAST!!
NOW TO BUY A ONE-WAY TRAIN TICKET!

FROM HERE ON IT'LL BE A BREEZE! I'LL BE SAFE NOW!

I'VE DONE IT! I'VE PULLED OFF THE ROBBERY OF THE CENTURY!!

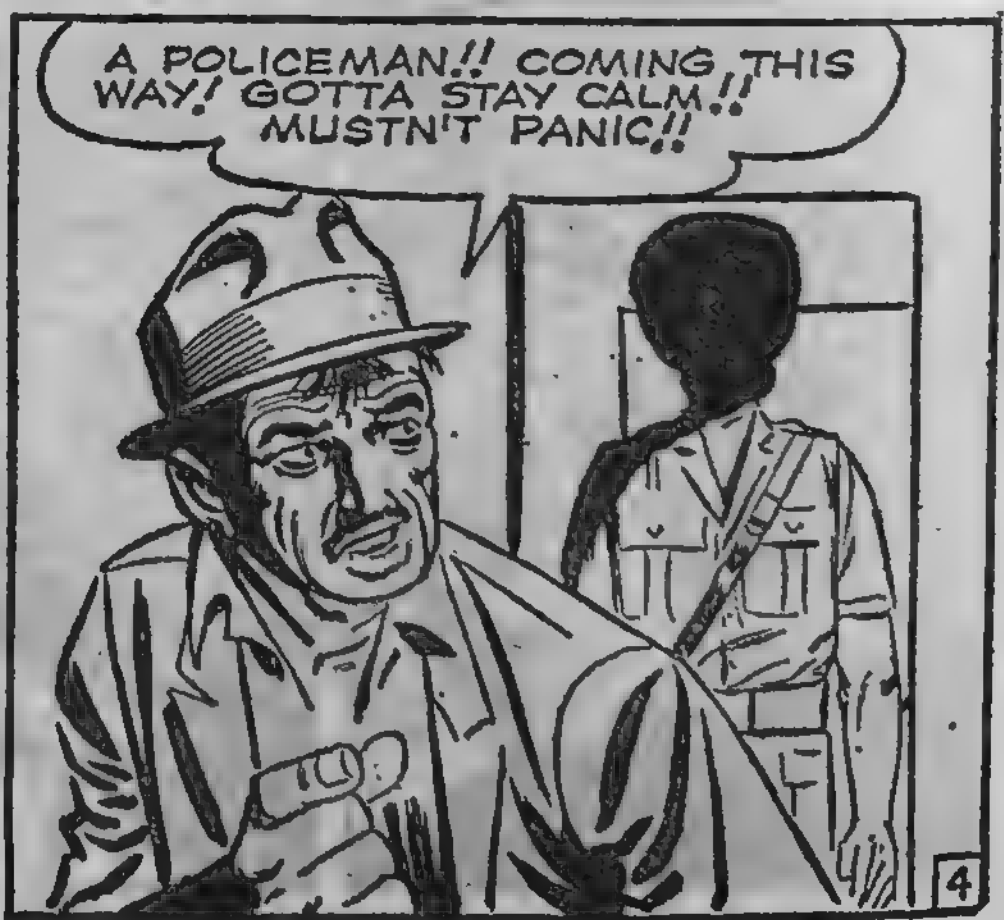
WONDER WHAT THAT STRANGE LIGHT IS? IT--IT'S FOLLOWING THE TRAIN!

THE LAMA AGAIN!!

I'M IMAGINING THINGS AGAIN! THAT'S ALL IT IS!
B-BUT IT LOOKS SO REAL! SO REAL!!

I'LL GET AWAY FROM THE WINDOW!
I'LL FIND A WAY TO LOSE THAT FACE, SOMEHOW!

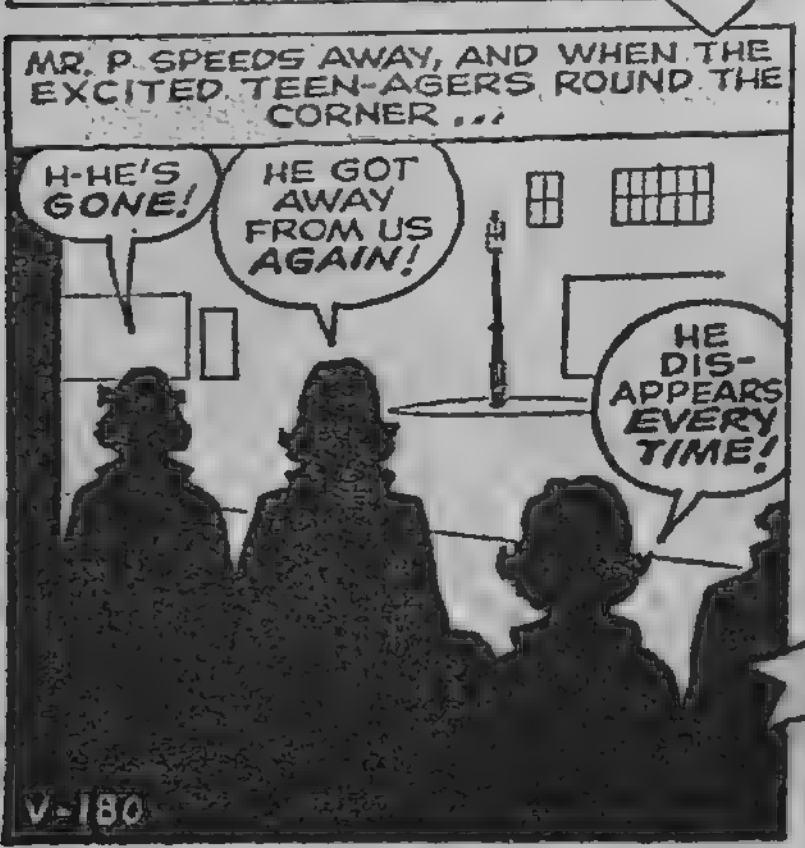
OH NO!! WHEREVER I LOOK--THE SAME FACE!! HOW?? HOW??!


A POLICEMAN!! COMING THIS WAY! GOTTA STAY CALM!! MUSTN'T PANIC!!

AND, ACCORDING TO THE LEGEND, HIS LAUGH ECHOED AFTER HIM... ALL THE WAY DOWN!!

THE END

the MYSTERIOUS MR. P!



WHO *IS* MR. P? WHERE DOES HE COME FROM? NOBODY KNOWS! ALL THAT *IS* KNOWN IS THAT ONE NIGHT LAST YEAR HE APPEARED BACKSTAGE AT THE EMPIRE THEATER...

Y'SAY YOU'RE A MUSICIAN-- A CLARINETIST, EH?

THAT'S RIGHT! ALL I ASK IS THAT YOU TRY ME OUT! GIVE ME A CHANCE TO PLAY BEFORE AN AUDIENCE!

THE BEARD AND THE CAPE AND THE GLASSES MIGHT BE A GOOD SHOW BUSINESS GIMMICK! ALL RIGHT, MR. P, YOU'LL HAVE YOUR CHANCE!

THANKS! YOU WON'T BE SORRY!

SO MR. P MADE HIS FIRST PUBLIC APPEARANCE, AND HE WAS A *SMASH HIT!*

MAN, DIG THAT CRAZY CLARINET!

THAT CAT'S TERRIF!

HE'S THE MOST! THE ABSOLUTE ULTIMATE!

GO, MR. P --GO! GO!

BY THE TIME THE PERFORMANCE WAS ENDED, A STAR WAS BORN!

TELL ME, ABE, CAN I PICK 'EM, OR CAN I!

YOU SURE *CAN*, BOSS! THOSE TEEN-AGERS ARE GOING *WILD* OVER HIM!

HOWEVER, THE PUBLIC HAS A STRONG CURIOSITY ABOUT ITS STARS AND *THAT'S* WHERE THE TROUBLE BEGAN...

BUT SURELY YOU CAN GIVE US SOME INFORMATION!

YOUR FANS WANT TO KNOW ALL *ABOUT* YOU -- WHERE YOU LEARNED TO PLAY-- HOW YOU BROKE INTO SHOW BUSINESS!

I'M SORRY, GENTLEMEN, BUT I HAVE NOTHING TO SAY!

IN DESPERATION THE REPORTERS TURNED TO MR. P'S EMPLOYER...

SORRY, BOYS, MR. P WON'T TELL *ME* ANY MORE THAN HE'S TOLD *YOU*! I DON'T KNOW WHERE HE'S FROM OR WHERE HE GOES WHEN HE LEAVES HERE AT NIGHT! ONLY THING I KNOW ABOUT HIM IS THAT HE PLAYS A MEAN CLARINET!

SOON MR. P, THE TEEN-AGER'S IDOL, THE MYSTERIOUS MUSICIAN, BECAME THE TALK OF THE ENTIRE WORLD!

WHAT HAPPENED TO OUR "ANGRY YOUNG MEN"?!

THE CHAPS STOPPED BEING ANGRY WHEN THEY HEARD MR. P!

RECOR

BRIGITTE--SHMIGITTE! WHO CARES ABOUT *HER*? I'M LISTENING TO MR. P!

HONORABLE MR. P -- HE GREATER EVEN THAN SATCHMO!

THEN ONE DAY, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM A TOTALITARIAN COUNTRY CAME BACKSTAGE AT THE THEATER...

WE ARE GREAT ADMIRERS OF YOUR MUSIC! IF YOU WOULD GIVE A CONCERT TOUR IN OUR COUNTRY, WE SHALL PAY YOU WELL!

I... UH... DON'T KNOW...

SUCH A TOUR WOULD DO A GREAT DEAL TO EASE POLITICAL TENSIONS IN THE WORLD! IT WOULD BETTER RELATIONS BETWEEN OUR TWO DIFFERENT WAYS OF LIFE!

VERY WELL, IN THAT CASE I AGREE! I'LL LEAVE WITH YOU AT ONCE!

AND SO THE MYSTERIOUS MR. P EMBARKED ON A MISSION OF GOOD WILL...

KNOCK 'EM DEAD, MR. P!

COME BACK TO US SOON!

BUT EVEN AS THE PLANE TOOK OFF...

OUR PLAN *WORKED!*

YES, THE AMERICAN FOOLS ARE EASY TO DECEIVE! HA HA!

THE JETLINER SOON SPANNED THE OCEAN, CARRYING MR. P BEHIND THE IRON CURTAIN!

WE OF THE PEOPLES' REPUBLIC ARE HAPPY TO WELCOME YOU, MR. P! IF YOU WILL FOLLOW MY ORDERLY, HE WILL SHOW YOU TO YOUR QUARTERS!

THANK YOU!

RIGHT THROUGH THIS DOOR, MR. P!

BUT THEN THE TRUTH BEGAN TO GROW CLEAR...

SAY, WHERE DO THESE STEPS LEAD?

TO YOUR QUARTERS, MR. P! JUST KEEP RIGHT ON WALKING!

HERE YOU ARE, MR. P -- YOUR NEW *HOME*! HA HA HA!

HOURS PASSED! NO FOOD...NO COMMUNICATION... NOTHING! FINALLY THE FOREIGN OFFICIALS FIGURED THEY HAD SOFTENED UP THEIR PRISONER ENOUGH!

WE REGRET THE NECESSITY OF THIS DUNGEON, MR. P!

BUT WE FEEL IT'S THE IDEAL PLACE TO — AH-- PERSUADE YOU TO CO-*OPERATE* WITH US!

WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO *DO*?

WE WANT YOU TO BETRAY THE UNITED STATES! TO SIGN PAPERS AND MAKE SPEECHES TELLING THE WORLD THAT YOU PREFER *DICTATORSHIP* TO *DEMOCRACY*!

YOUTH ALL OVER THE WORLD IDOLIZES YOU! WHEN THEY LEARN THAT YOU CHOOSE TOTALITARIAN-ISM, THEY MAY *ALSO* CHOOSE IT AS THEIR WAY OF LIFE!

AND IF I *REFUSE* TO HELP YOU?

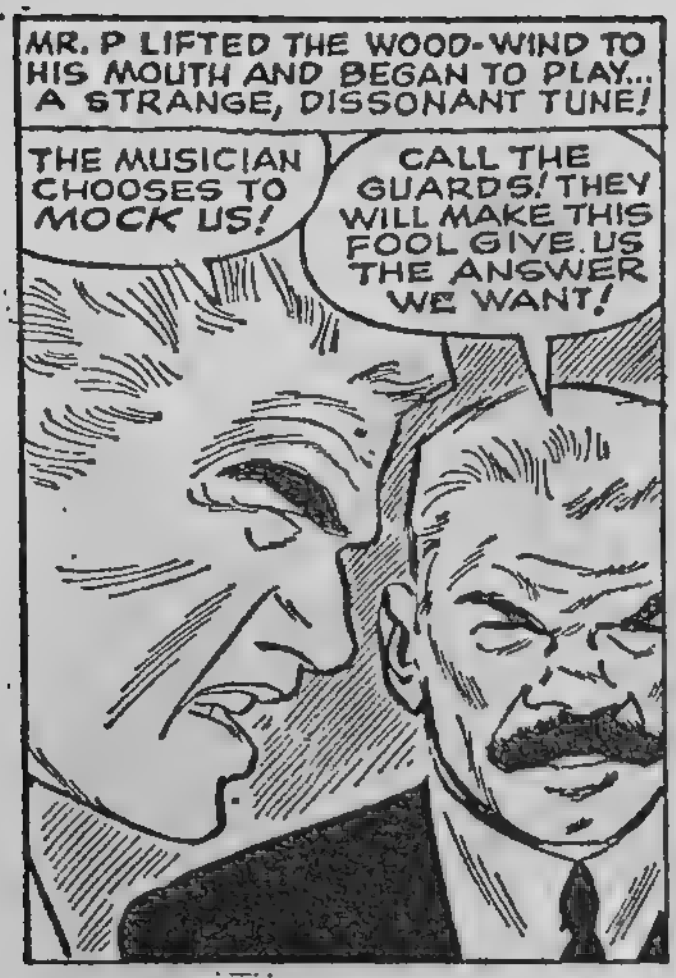
WE SHALL HAVE TO-- AH-- PERSUADE YOU!

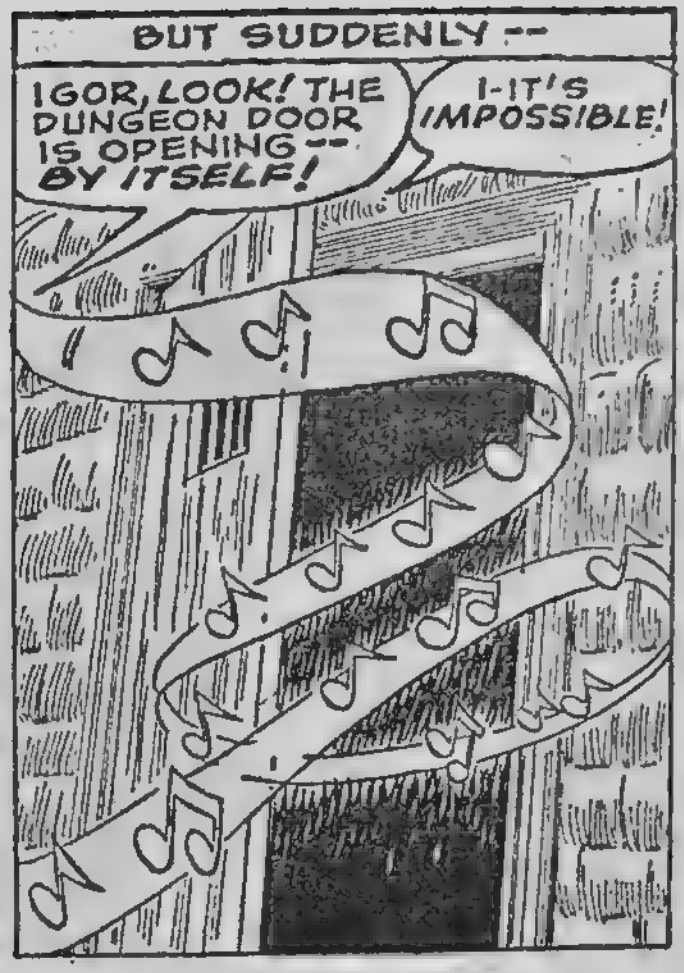
BY THE TIME WE'RE FIN-ISHED WITH YOU, YOU WILL *BEG* TO BETRAY YOUR COUNTRY!

WELL, WHAT IS YOUR ANSWER ??!

MY ANSWER, GENTLEMEN, IS *THIS*!

HIS *CLARINET*! WHA--??


MR. P LIFTED THE WOOD-WIND TO HIS MOUTH AND BEGAN TO PLAY... A STRANGE, DISSONANT TUNE!
THE MUSICIAN CHOOSES TO MOCK US!
CALL THE GUARDS! THEY WILL MAKE THIS FOOL GIVE US THE ANSWER WE WANT!


BUT SUDDENLY --
IGOR, LOOK! THE DUNGEON DOOR IS OPENING -- BY ITSELF!
I-IT'S IMPOSSIBLE!

THE MUSICIAN IS WALKING OUT... AND I'M FOLLOWING HIM! I-I CAN'T STOP HIM! I CAN'T DO ANYTHING BUT FOLLOW HIM!
IT'S HIS MUSIC!! WE MUST FOLLOW THE SOUND OF THE MUSIC!

WE'RE--WE'RE IN A SPELL! THE MUSIC HAS US, ALL IN A SPELL!
I WANT TO STOP, BUT I CAN'T CONTROL MY LEGS! THEY KEEP MOVING!
I MUST FOLLOW THE MUSIC! FOLLOW THE MUSIC!

LOOK! MR. P IS REMOVING HIS GLASSES, HIS BEARD! NOW--NOW I KNOW WHO HE REALLY IS!!

HE'S THE PIED PIPER! MR. P! WE SHOULD HAVE GUESSED!
AND AS LONG AS HE PLAYS... WE'RE DOOMED TO FOLLOW HIM...WHEREVER HE GOES -- EVEN IF IT'S SOME MYSTERIOUS PLACE-- OUT OF THIS WORLD!

YES, HE WAS THE PIED PIPER, AND HE WAS LEAVING US, TAKING SOME OF THE MOST UNDESIRABLE CITIZENS OF EARTH WITH HIM! ONE DAY, WHEN OUR PLANET IS OLDER AND WISER, PERHAPS HE WILL RETURN! BUT UNTIL THEN, WE MUST WAIT, AND HOPE, AND LISTEN-- -- LISTEN FOR THE MAGIC MELODY OF THE MYSTERIOUS MR. P!!
THE END

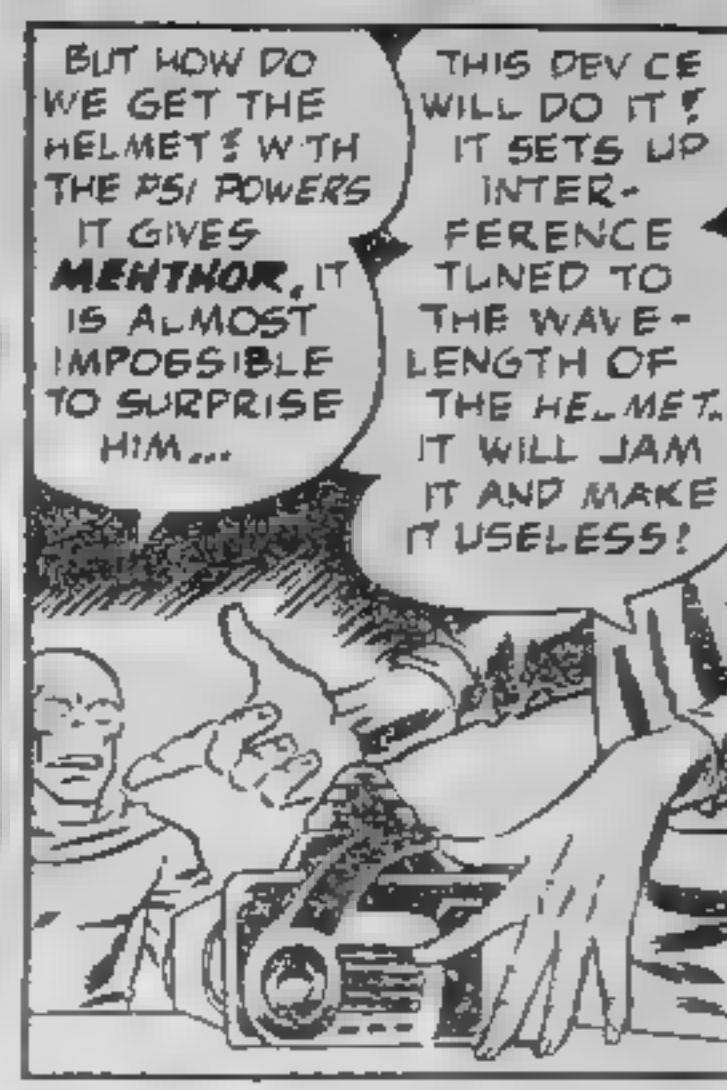
MENTHOR

PART OF THE OATH TAKEN BY EVERY **THUNDER AGENT** STATES THAT HE MUST BE READY TO LAY DOWN HIS LIFE IN THE COURSE OF HIS DUTY, FOR THE CAUSE OF MANKIND... JANUS IS UNAWARE THAT TODAY HE WILL HAVE TO MAKE THE MOST FATEFUL DECISION ANY MAN CAN MAKE....

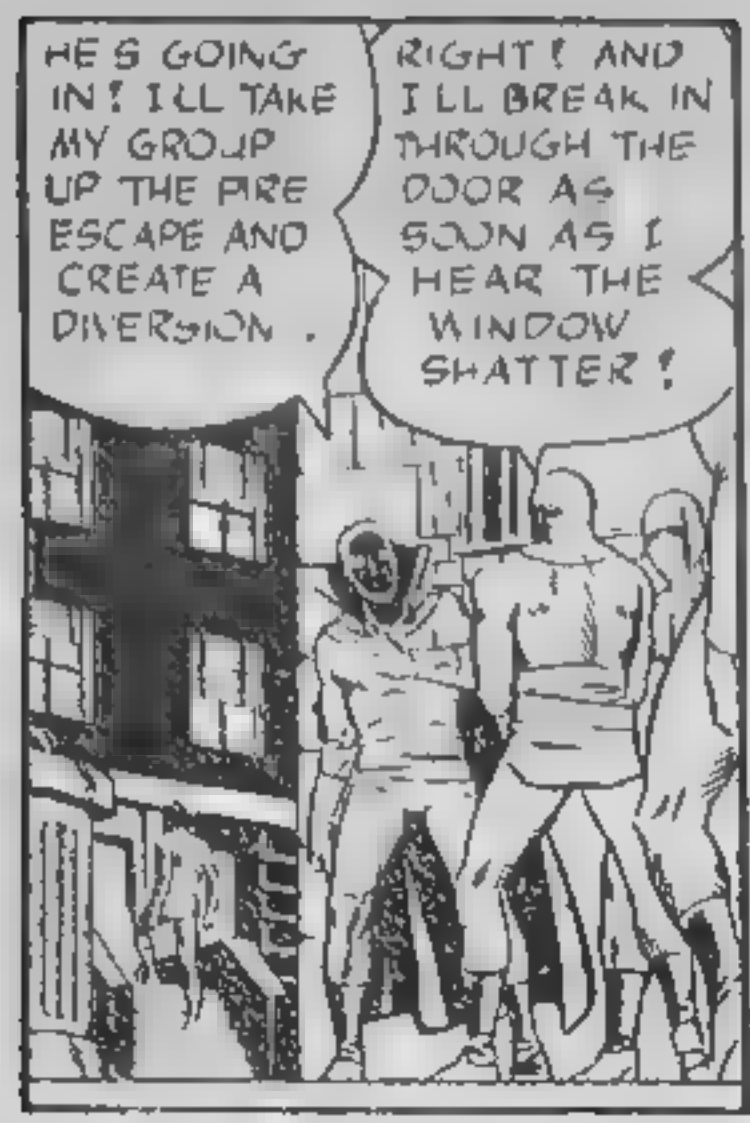
"A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH!"

AT THE T.H.U.N.D.E.R. SCIENCE DEPARTMENT....

SEVERAL MILES BENEATH THEM, ANOTHER CONFERENCE IS BEING HELD.....



THAT NIGHT, AS MENTHOR HEADS HOMEWARD....


HE'S GOING IN! I'LL TAKE MY GROUP UP THE FIRE ESCAPE AND CREATE A DIVERSION.
RIGHT! AND I'LL BREAK IN THROUGH THE DOOR AS SOON AS I HEAR THE WINDOW SHATTER!

A FEW MINUTES LATER...
IT'S BEEN A LONG DAY... I MIGHT AS WELL PUT THE HELMET AWAY AND HIT THE SACK...

TOMORROW'S ANOTHER DAY.. WHAT'S THAT?!

GOOD EVENING MENTHOR! JUST LEAVE THE SAFE OPEN!

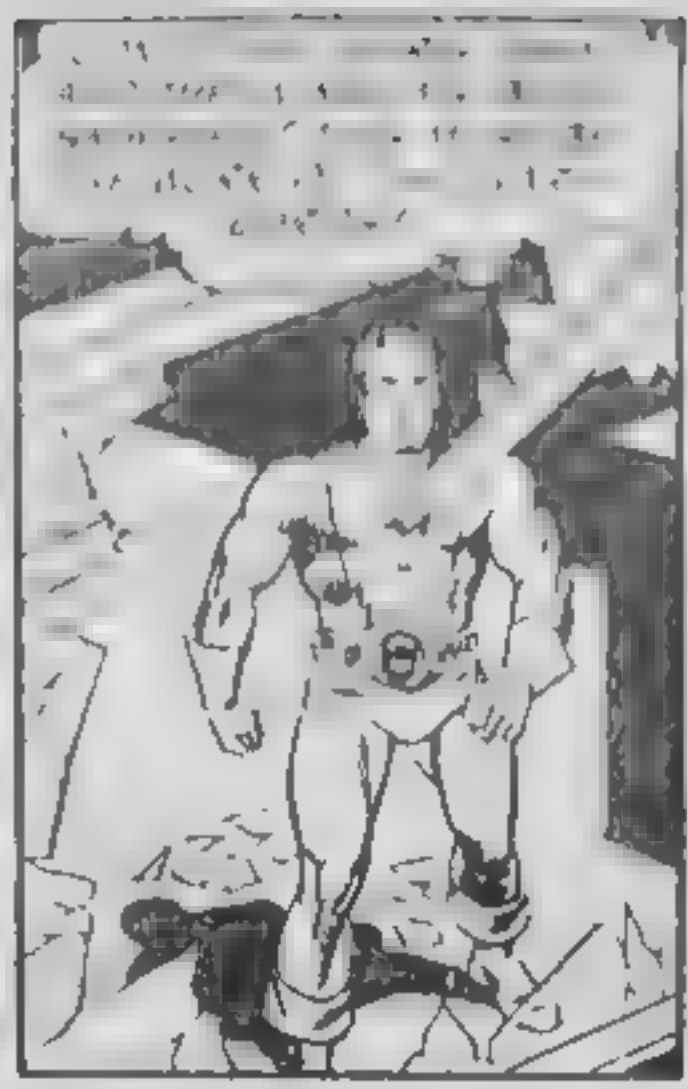
A WARLORD!
GOT TO GET THE HELMET ON!
POW!
POW!
ZANG!
BLASTED DOOR IS IN MY WAY!

DROP THAT GUN! I COMMAND YOU!
HIS POWER... TOO MUCH... FOR ME...

THIS IS ALMOST TOO EASY... SOMETHING WRONG... IT'S A TRAP!
THAT'S RIGHT MENTHOR... IT'S ALL OVER FOR YOU NOW...

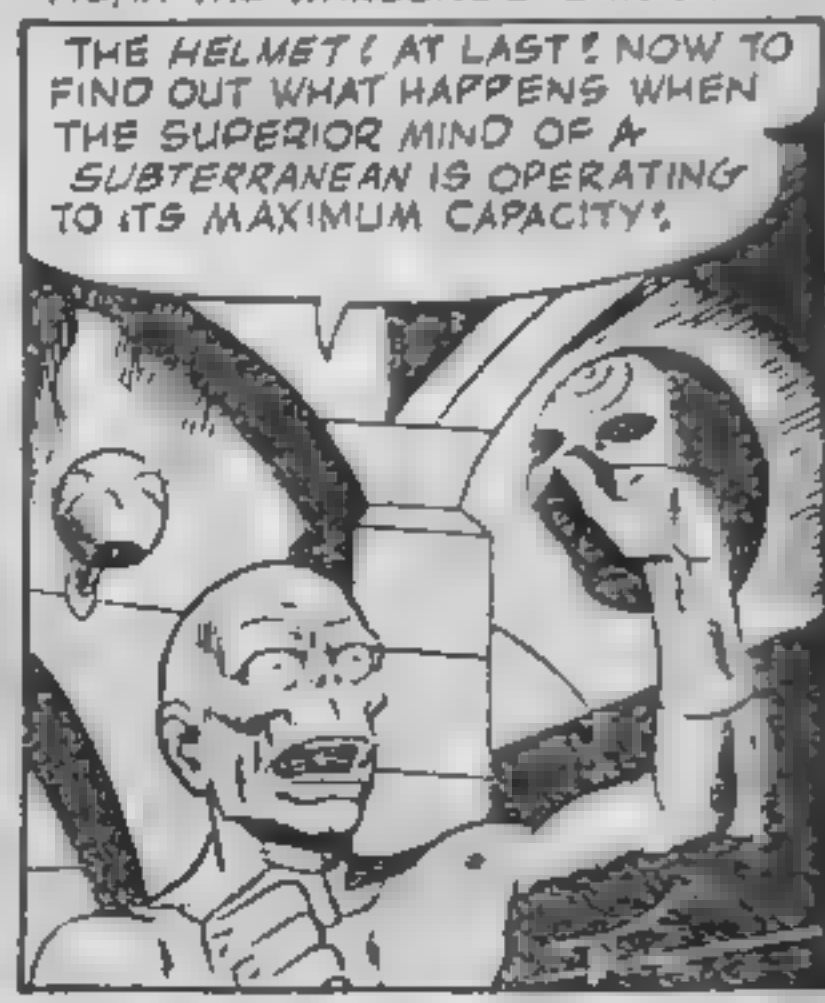
FINALLY **MENTHOR** IS SUBDUED BY SHEER NUMBERS...

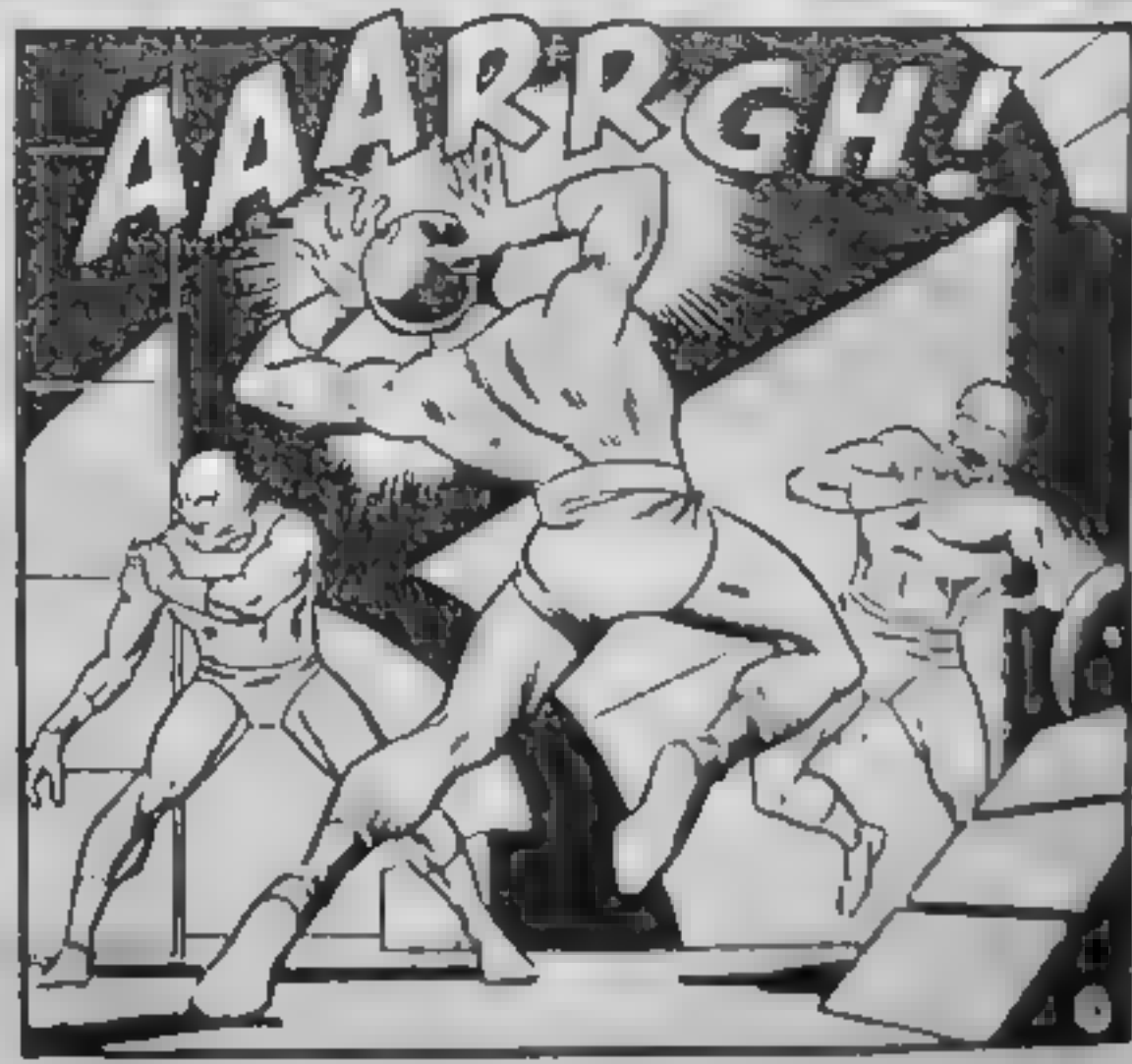
SHORTLY AFTERWARD, IN THE HOME OF LEN BROWN...



SOON THE THUNDER AGENTS ARE GATHERED...

AS, IN THE WARLORDS' CAVE...

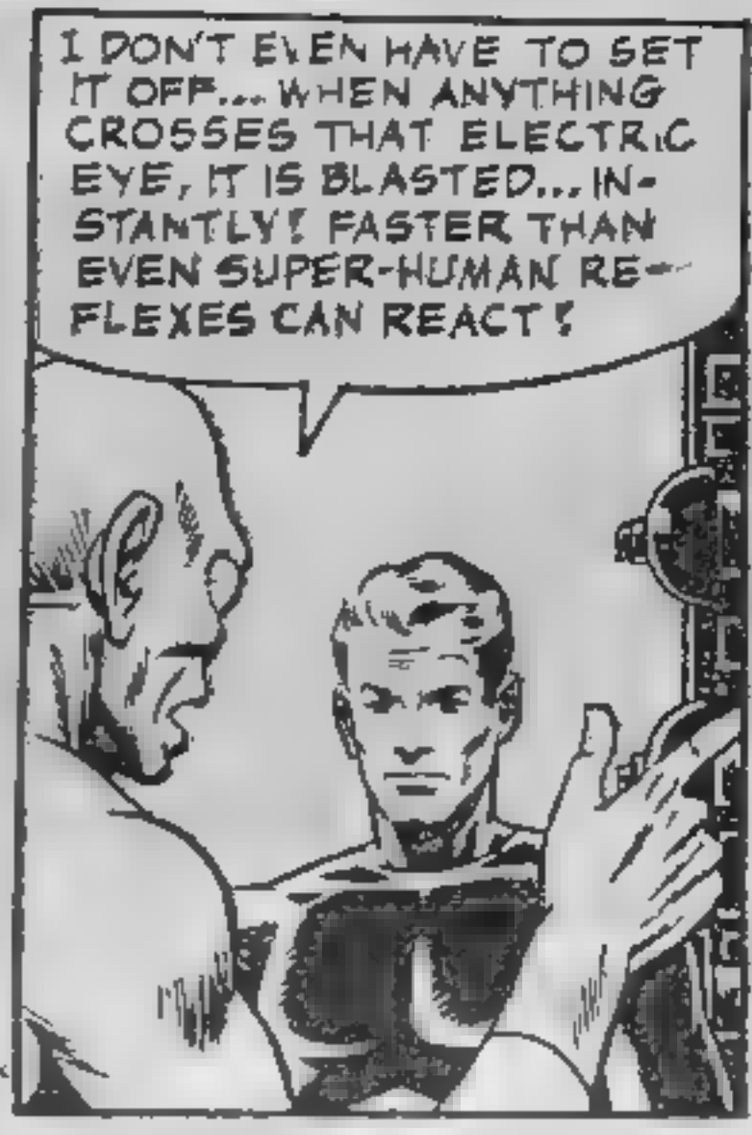




IT KILLED HIM! YOU SHALL...FOR THAT YOU DIE!
NO, HE ISN'T DEAD... BUT I HAVE ANOTHER LITTLE SURPRISE FOR YOU! THE HELMET IS BROAD-CASTING A SIGNAL...

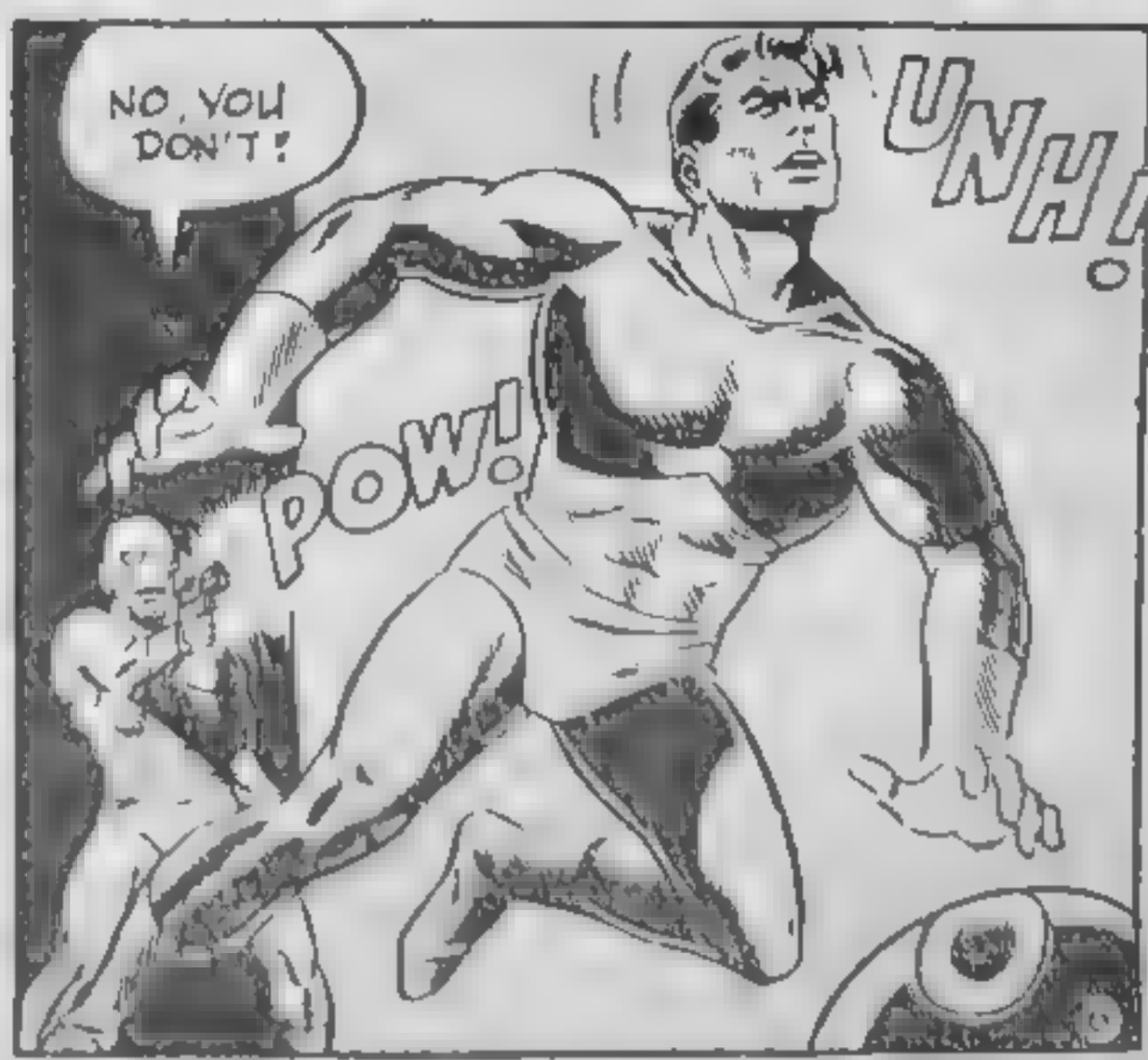
...AND AT THIS MOMENT, EVERY AVAILABLE AGENT IS UNDOUBTEDLY CLOSING IN ON THIS SPOT!
THANK YOU FOR THE INFORMATION, BUT WE KNOW THAT! IT IS JUST THE WAY WE PLANNED IT!

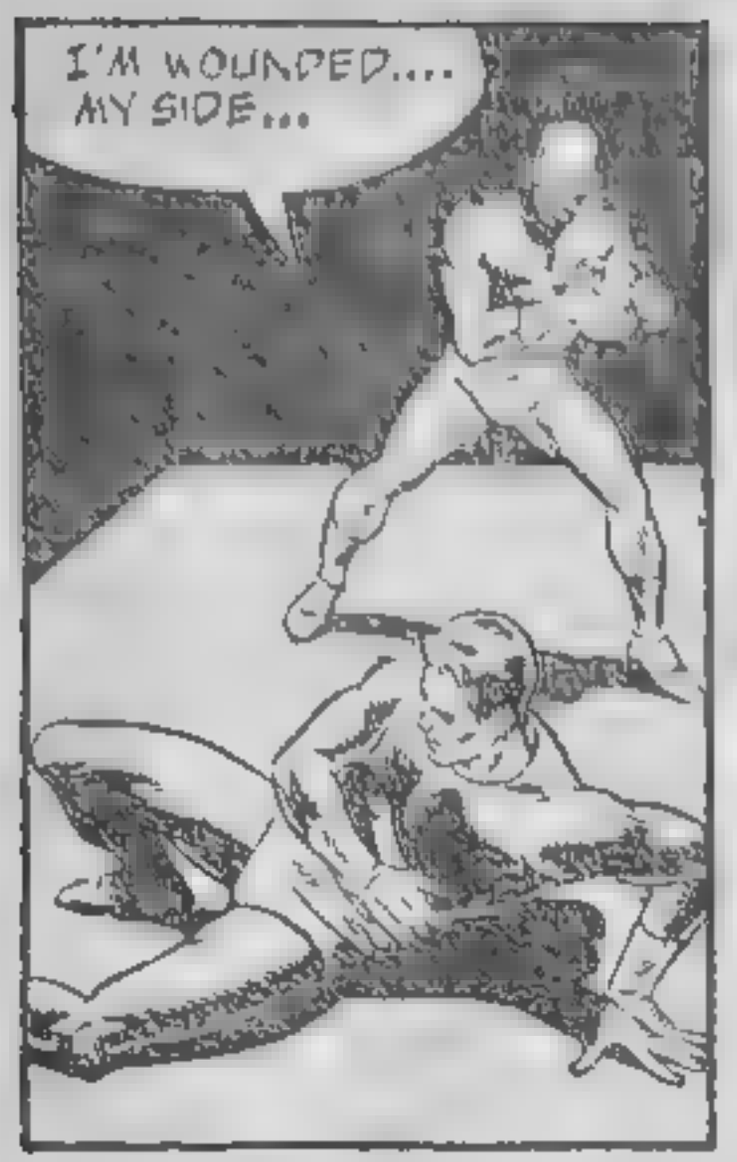
THE MACHINES YOU SEE HERE ARE A BATTERY OF LASER GUNS TRAINED ON THAT DOORWAY...


I DON'T EVEN HAVE TO SET IT OFF... WHEN ANYTHING CROSSES THAT ELECTRIC EYE, IT IS BLASTED... IN-STANTLY! FASTER THAN EVEN SUPER-HUMAN RE-FLEXES CAN REACT!

SO, NOTHING WILL SAVE THEM THIS TIME.... SPEED, STRENGTH, ABILITY TO SWITCH BODIES...THIS TIME WE PUT AN END TO THUNDER....FOR GOOD!

I SHOULD KILL YOU NOW... BUT I WANT TO SEE THE EXPRESSION ON YOUR FACE WHEN YOUR FRIENDS WALK THROUGH THAT DOOR!
GOT TO GET MY HELMET...


NO, YOU DON'T!
UNH!
POW!

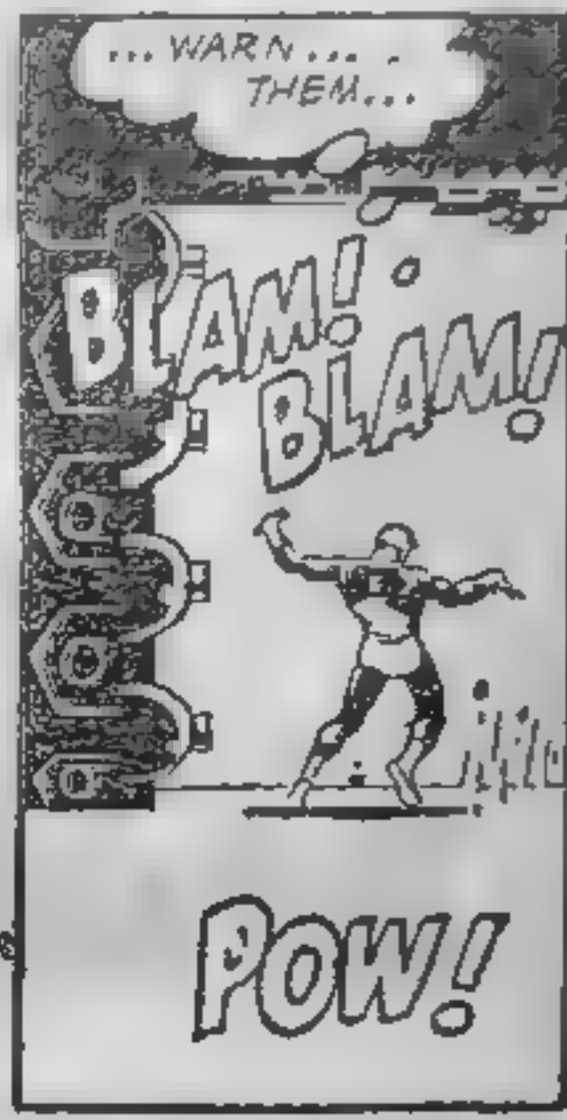

I'M WOUNDED.... MY SIDE...

THEY'RE COMING! THE RADIO DIRECTION FINDER REPORTS A GROUP OF INTRUDERS HAVE JUST BROKEN THROUGH THE OUTER DOOR!
EVERY-ONE! TO YOUR STATIONS! GET SET....
M ST DO... SOMETH G... M. STN T BLACK OUT...I...

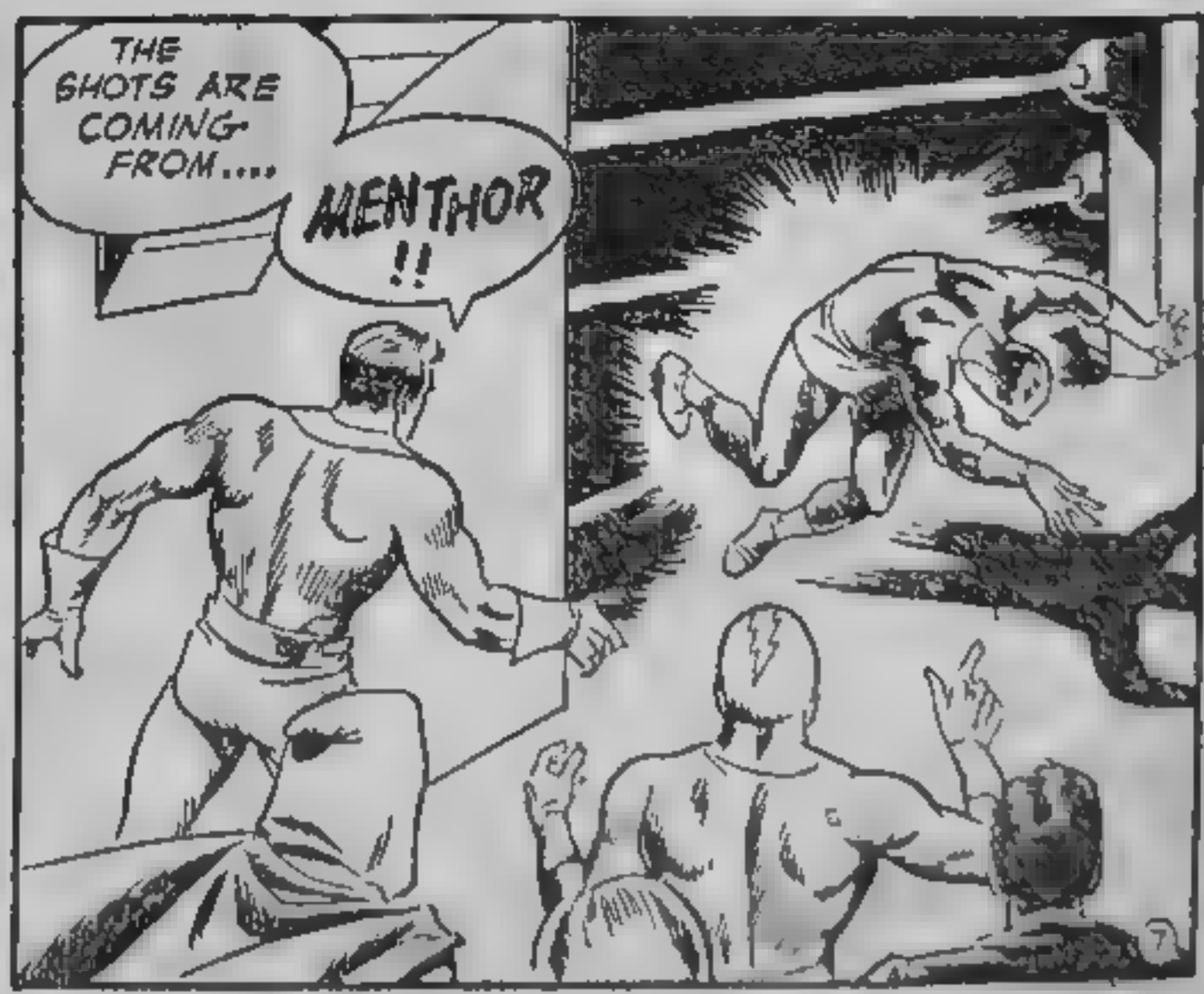
...CAN'T JUST LET THEM...KILL...LEN...

LOOK! HE'S UP! STOP HIM!
...KITTEN... ...WEED....
POW!

...NOMAN...GUY.... ...GOT, TO....
BLAM!


...WARN... THEM...
BLAM! BLAM!
POW!

ZZAP!


THE SHOTS ARE COMING FROM....
MENTHOR !!

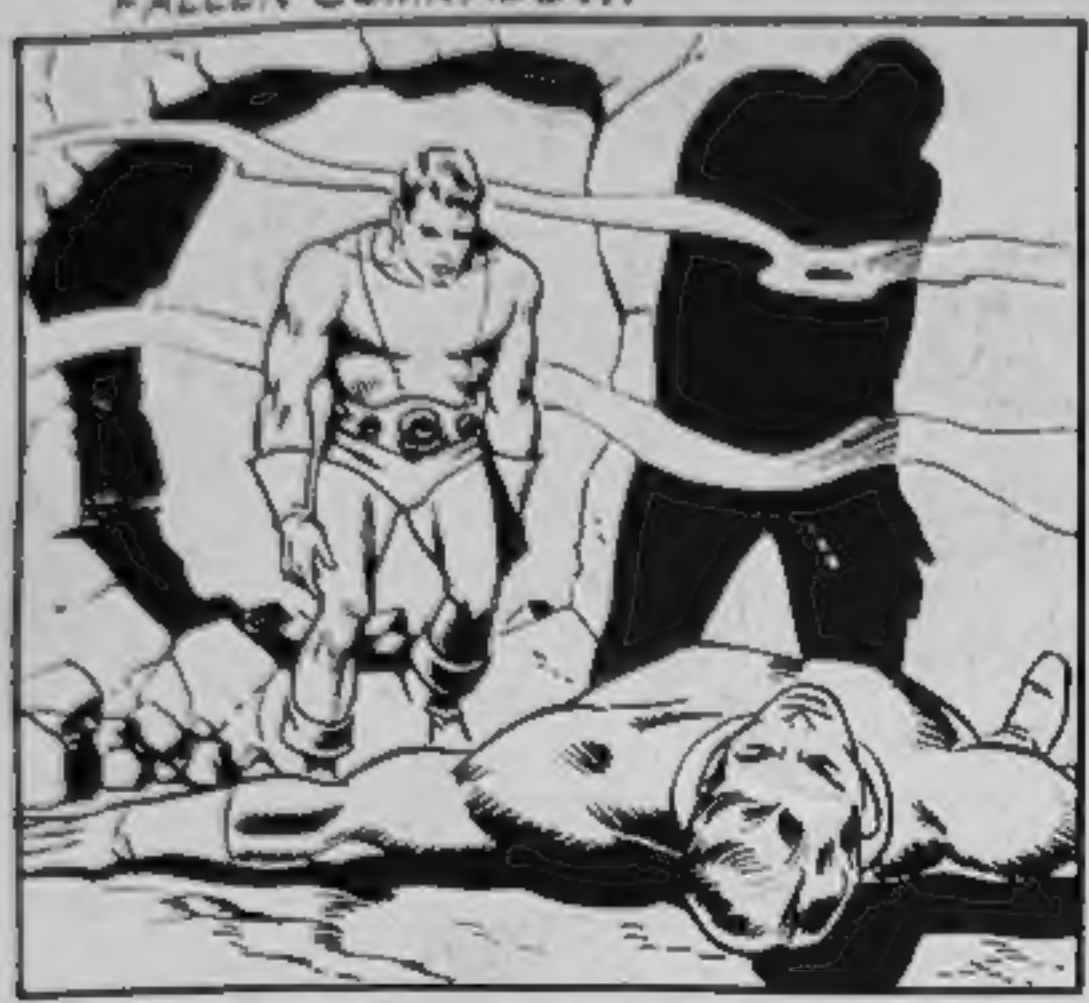
WITH BLAZING EYES, DYNAMO BURSTS THROUGH THE WALL AS IF IT WERE PAPER!

THE **THUNDER AGENTS** FIGHT IN SILENT, SAVAGE FURY, GIVING NO QUARTER....

... AND THE GREEN MEN AND THEIR MINDLESS SLAVES ARE FORCED BACK...

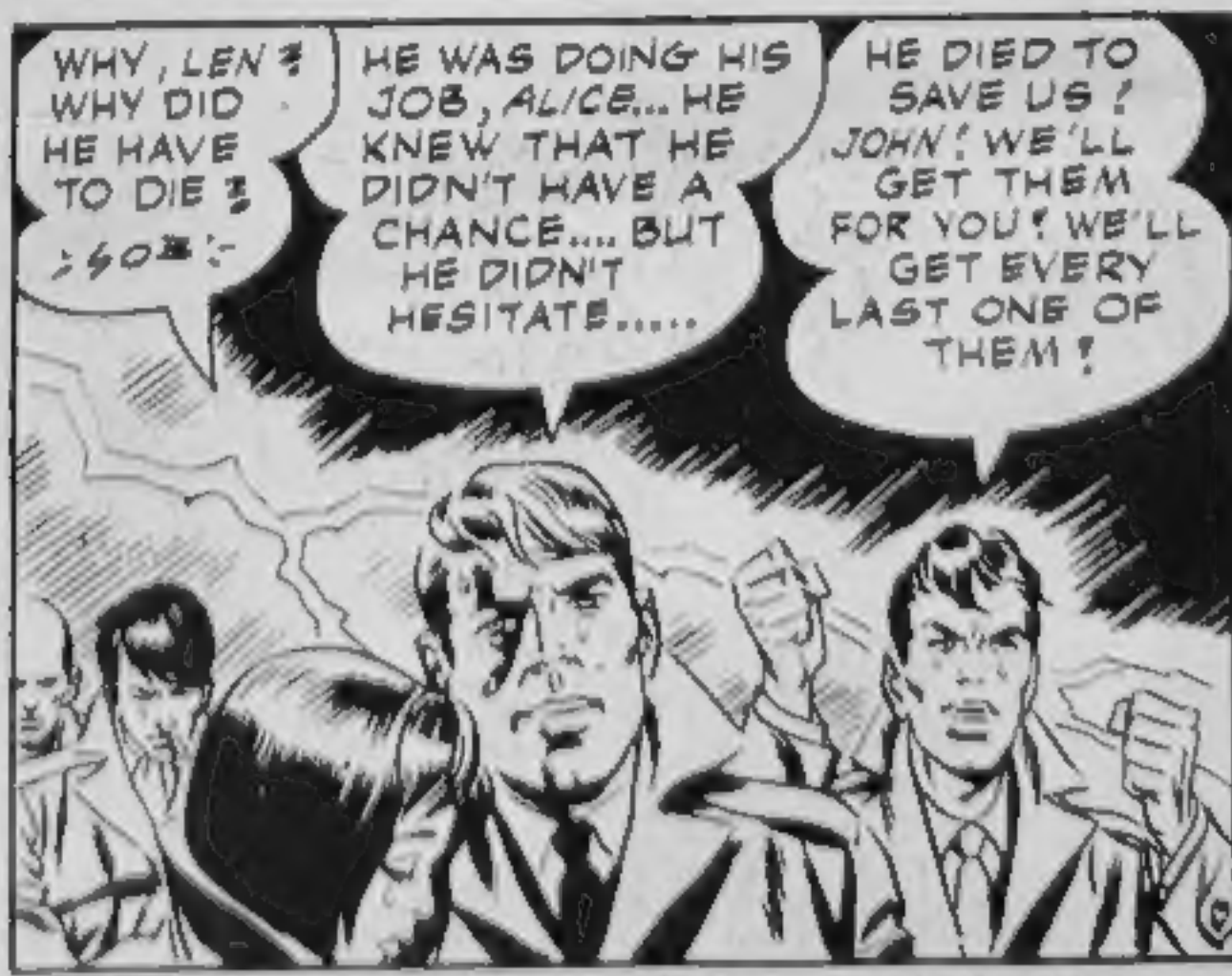
...EVER BACK, UNTIL THERE IS NO LONGER ANY RETREAT.... ONLY EXTINCTION!!

THEN DYNAMO TURNS AND RETURNS TO THE CRUMPLED FIGURE OF HIS FALLEN COMRADE...



SEVERAL DAYS LATER, ON A RAIN-SWEPT HILLSIDE CEMETERY IN THE HOME TOWN OF JOHN JANUS, A SIMPLE CEREMONY IS HELD....

AND THEN THE VISITORS FILE AWAY WITH HEAVY HEARTS, EACH ALONE WITH HIS SORROW....



"GREATER LOVE HATH NO MAN THAN THAT HE LAY DOWN HIS LIFE FOR HIS FRIEND"....

— FINIS —

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WEIRD PLANETS

PLACE YOUR ORDER NOW